

PLAYERS National/ACC
Position
Rankings

TEAMS We
Rank
All 117

RECRUITING Rankings,
Analyses
and Bios

Lindy's

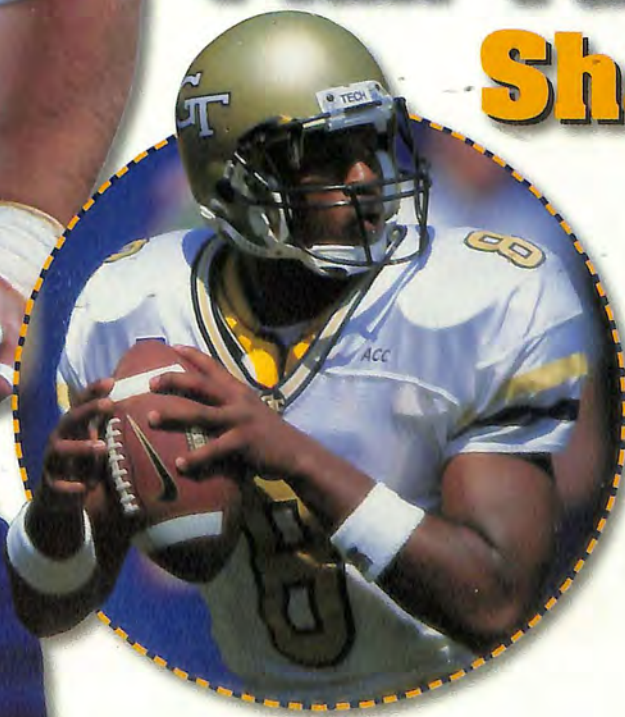
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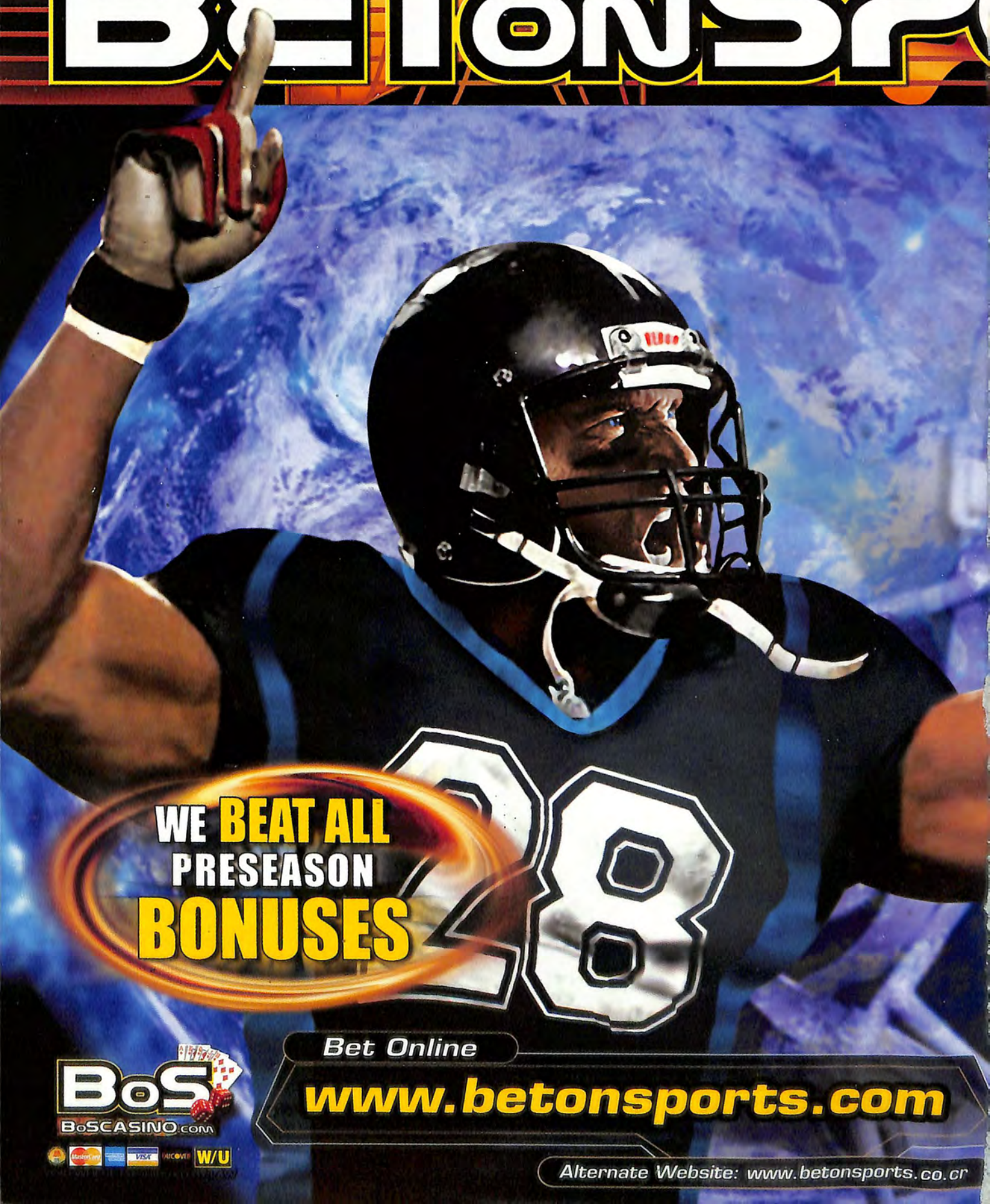
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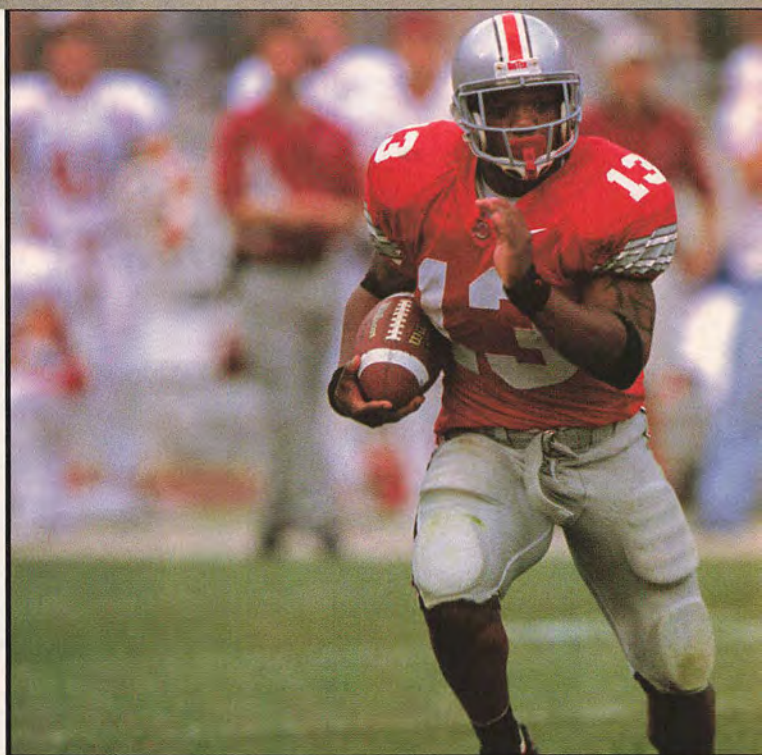
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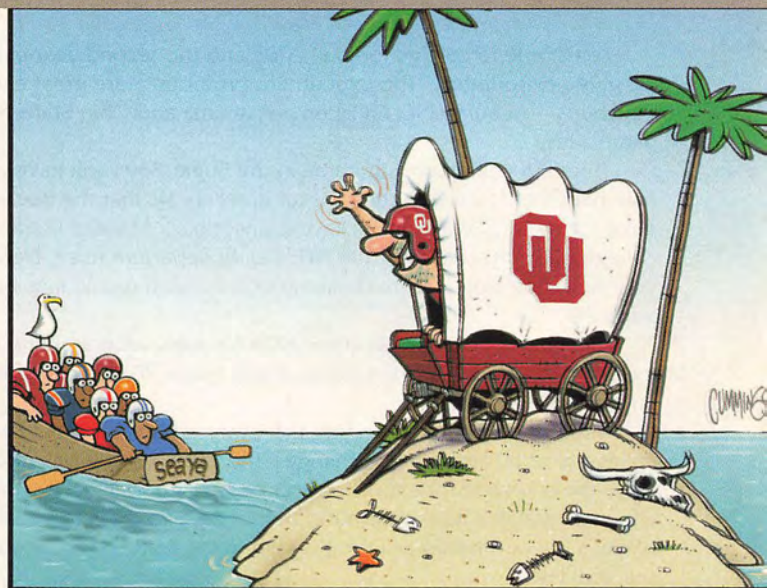
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Letter from the Publisher

Welcome to college football 2003 and the second year of the NCAA 12-game experiment. The experiment promises more great early season matchups – Auburn-USC, Oklahoma-Alabama and Ohio State-N.C. State to name a few.

The BCS championship game in the Sugar Bowl will have a hard time matching the double overtime Fiesta Bowl classic that the Buckeyes and Canes gave the nation. Will star Buckeye running back Maurice Clarett be the first college player to challenge the NFL's early departure rule? Dennis Dodd gives you the inside story on the challenges that Clarett would face beginning on page 20.

Dodd also takes a look at the NCAA's somewhat arbitrary ruling to include postseason stats in seasons totals (page 30). Are any records sacred any more?

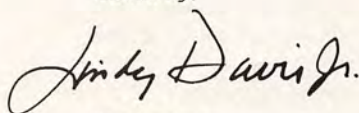
I'm not sure about changing the way stats are kept, but I am sure that college football needs a rule change. The rule that says only the ball needs to cross the end zone for a touchdown needs to go. To receive six points, a football player's forward motion should have to cross the goal line. It's the player's forward motion all the way down the field — why should it be less at the goal line?

Football is a physical game and shouldn't become any less physical on the goal line. The point was really brought home (again) last year as I watched the Tennessee-Florida showdown in Knoxville. Florida lined up from Tennessee's 1-yard line and the running back was crushed at the 1-yard line. His second effort didn't produce another inch, but it did allow him to reach his arm across the goal line for a TD — while he was still at the one. That's a touchdown?

Players holding the ball out over the pylon as they go out of bounds on the 2-yard line is a joke! The bad rule creates more judgment calls for an official — never a good thing.

I hope your favorite team is bowling somewhere at the end of the year. Have a great season.

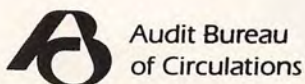
Sincerely,



Lindy Davis
Publisher

P.S. Mike Price was fired as Alabama's head coach as *Lindy's* went to press. This is reflected in most, but not all, references in this edition.

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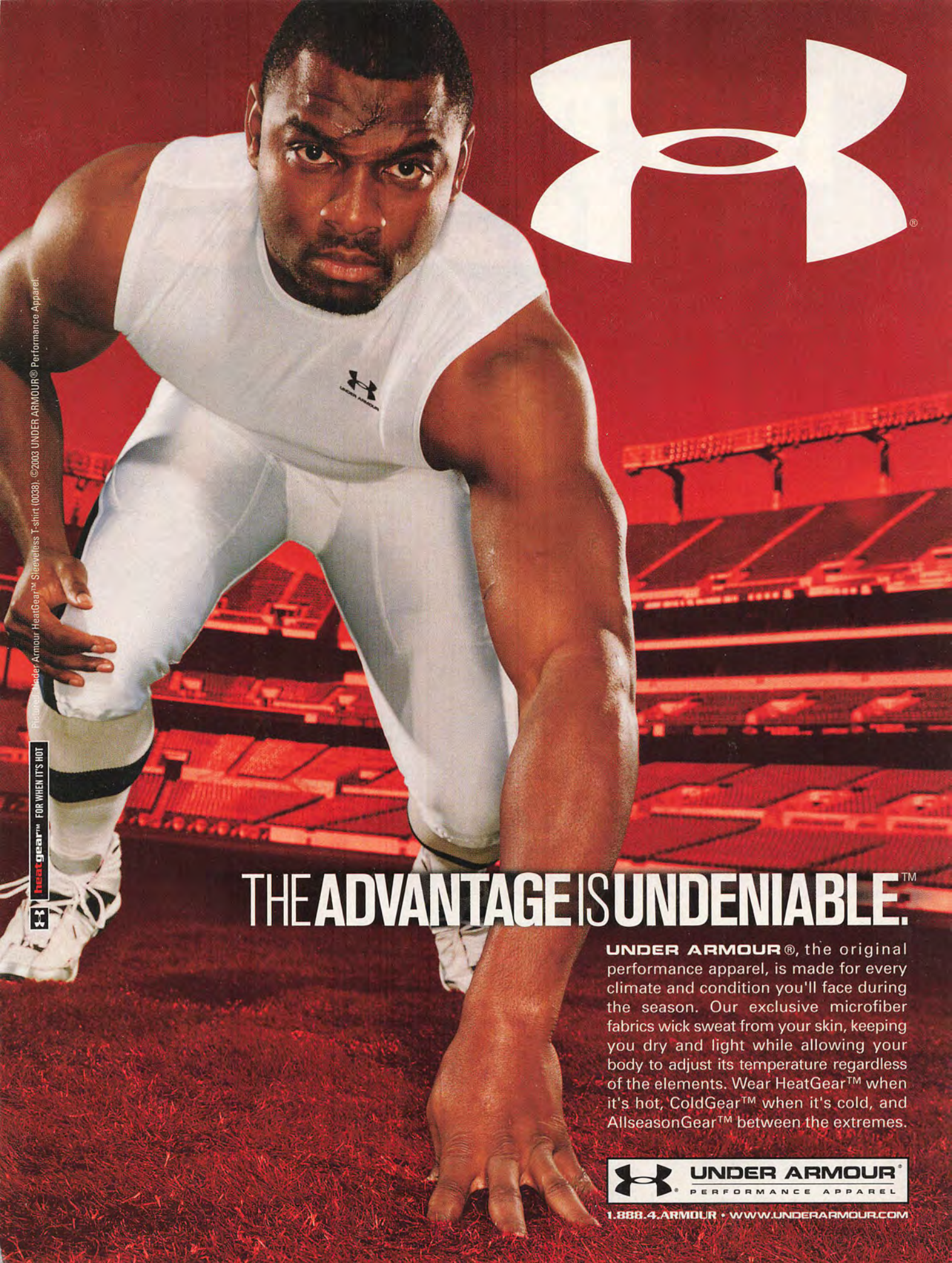
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NATIONAL PICKS



PHOTO BY SCOTT HALLERAN

1. OKLAHOMA

Here We Go Again ... Sooners Primed for Title



Never mind who will play quarterback. Forget about how to replace ultra-productive running back Quentin Griffin. Disregard the new corps of receivers, the premature loss of end Jimmy Wilkerson to the NFL and the two consecutive excruciating losses to Oklahoma State.

The Sooners, like last year, are *Lindy's* pick to win the national title. It went awry last season as OU's vaunted defense took a couple of ill-timed vacations — mostly with its ability to defend the deep pass — but that just serves as fuel for the fire this time around. Talent, coaching, chip on their shoulders, a new safety to help solidify the back of the defense ... the Sooners have it all and should win it all.

THE GOOD NEWS: In his fifth season, coach Bob Stoops has developed astounding depth to go with his top-line NFL-ready players, able to send quality defenders onto the field like it was a hockey line shift. The excess especially shows in the secondary, although the biggest upgrade

in this team is the offensive line, where tackles Jammal Brown and Wes Sims and center Vince Carter will cover for any issues at quarterback. Off-injured Jason White is likely first up to direct an offense that worked this spring on being more multiple.

THE BAD NEWS: Standout defensive end Jimmy Wilkerson, acting upon some bad advice, bolted early for the NFL, leaving the Sooners (sob) with a mere nine returning defensive starters.

The schedule is not for the meek, with a Sept. 6 game at Alabama serving as an early measuring stick before the usual Big 12 gauntlet, which includes a crossover road game at Colorado. The worst news of all: The Sooners' personal whipping boy, Chris Simms, is no longer quarterback at Texas.

OUR CALL: Oklahoma is one of a handful of teams with no noticeable dropoff in talent for the foreseeable future. The beat will go on even after DT Tommie Harris, LB Teddy Lehman, CB Derrick Strait and pals wrap up the school's eighth national title this season.



2. MIAMI

Talent Wins; NFL Talent Wins Even More

As the NFL's most productive minor-league franchise, the Hurricanes have sent 13 players to the NFL first round in the past three drafts. The dial-a-star conveyor belt isn't slowing down, with another four, five, six potential first-rounders for the 2004 draft alone. Remember, these guys are just one bad-call Fiesta Bowl penalty from dynasty status.

THE GOOD NEWS: A year after being more conservative on defense, Miami plans to let the hounds loose with more blitzing. RB Frank Gore appears ready to resume the Heisman campaign that Willis McGahee picked up when Gore was injured last year.

THE BAD NEWS: With non-conference games against Florida, Florida State and Tennessee, along with tricky league scraps at Boston College, Virginia Tech and Pittsburgh, Miami can't afford many off days from Ken Dorsey's replacement at quarterback, Brock Berlin.

OUR CALL: The leadership void created by Dorsey's graduation shouldn't be taken lightly ... but we'll do it anyway. Berlin, a Florida transfer, should be just fine as he rides on some very talented coattails.



3. OHIO STATE

If Breaks Keep Coming, Bucks Could Repeat

With a team that is arguably better than the one that went undefeated and beat Miami for last year's national title, perhaps a No. 3 ranking is too low. No respect for the champs? They seem to prefer that, anyway. The Bucks didn't listen to predictions of doom against the 'Canes, and now have 18 returning starters focused squarely on the Sugar Bowl.

THE GOOD NEWS: All 11 starters — and many key reserves — are back on an offense that was as good as it needed to be last season and should really roar this time around. The defense is still nails; nobody runs on the Buckeyes — isn't that right, Miami?

THE BAD NEWS: The law of averages applies. Ohio State won seven games by a touchdown or less last season, needing clutch interceptions, miracle passes and the occasional benefit of the doubt from the refs. The Buckeyes can't be that fortunate again ... can they?

OUR CALL: Jim Tressel isn't about to let his players develop heads too big for their helmets. They won't relinquish the throne easily, but sooner or later the Bucks are going to lose one they shouldn't.



4. MICHIGAN

Can 'Michigan Line' Push Past Buckeyes?

John Navarre could become sort of a poor-man's Carson Palmer — a talented quarterback who puts it all together as a fifth-year senior and leads his team to the next level. He wasn't bad last season — 2,905 yards, 21 TDs and seven INTs — and he drew raves in the spring as a take-charge guy. He gives the Wolverines a shot to unseat the Buckeyes.

THE GOOD NEWS: Coach Lloyd Carr calls this a "Michigan line" which is Wolverine-speak for big, powerful and arguably the best in the nation. Defense — notably the secondary led by CB Marlin Jackson — has a chance to be special with a nice blend of veterans and newbies.

THE BAD NEWS: That Michigan line needs to do a better job of knocking D-linemen on their keisters; the Wolverines were eighth in the Big Ten in rushing in 2001 and ninth last season. If running back Chris Perry isn't up to the task, it's big trouble for Big Blue.

OUR CALL: Navarre is poised for a big senior year, just like predecessors Brian Griese and Tom Brady. There's plenty else to make the season interesting, all the way to the finale — at home vs. Ohio State.



5. KANSAS STATE

Wildcats' Wins Go To 11

Starting in 1997, K-State's record is 11-1, 11-2, 11-1, 11-3, 6-6 and 11-2 ... so it's clear to see the treading-water season of 2001 was the exception to the rule — the rule being that the Wildcats are very, very good, even if they get as much respect as Carrot Top. That has a lot to do with their traditionally cushy non-league slate, which includes two I-AA teams in '03.

THE GOOD NEWS: QB Eli Roberson and RB Darren Sproles are each 1,000-yard rushers who give defenses fits with jock-loosening dekes. Bill Snyder almost always manages to field one of the nation's finest defenses, no matter the All-Americans he must replace.

THE BAD NEWS: For as feted as Terence Newman was, it's hard to appreciate how much an elite shut-down corner does for a defense until he's gone. Road games at Texas, Oklahoma State and Nebraska will test K-State's mettle. Might Roberson have to pass to win one of those?

OUR CALL: With Nebraska still regrouping and Colorado somewhat reloading, Kansas State will be back in the Big 12 title game for the first time since 2000, right in the hunt for that elusive BCS bid.



6. AUBURN

Backs in Bulk Bolster Plains Expectations

There was some mighty big news coming out of Tuscaloosa this offseason, but the biggest developments in the state of Alabama might have been the decisions of LBs Karlos Dansby and Dontarrious Thomas to stick around Auburn for their senior season. That helped to stamp the Tigers as the team to beat in the SEC West ... and they aren't likely to stop there.

THE GOOD NEWS: The Tigers have as many quality running backs as, say, the entire Pac-10, with junior college big boy Brandon Jacobs joining Carnell Williams, Ronnie Brown and Tre Smith. The offensive and defensive fronts are among the SEC's finest.

THE BAD NEWS: Auburn will have to pass the ball from time to time, and there isn't exactly a mountain of evidence that Jason Campbell — who now has the job all to himself — can do that consistently. The schedule, including an opener vs. USC, is one of the nation's toughest.

OUR CALL: Coach Tommy Tuberville has had the Tigers on the cusp of the SEC elite. The time is right for Auburn to bust through the glass ceiling and win the whole dang league.



7. TEXAS

Simms is Gone, But Don't Mock UT's Chances

Longhorns fans will debate whether the departure of Chris Simms falls into the "good news" or "bad news" category after he rewrote some of the school's passing records while — all together now — failing to win the big one. Next up is junior Chance Mock, although touted redshirt freshman Vince Young is in the mix, too, and both can do things with their feet that Simms couldn't.

THE GOOD NEWS: With LB Derrick Johnson, CB Nathan Vasher and a terrific DT tandem in Marcus Tubbs and Rod Wright, the Horns will put their defense up against anybody's. Athletic quarterbacks mean the offense can expand with option plays, QB draws and the like.

THE BAD NEWS: Oklahoma isn't getting any worse and Texas A&M, with the hiring of Dennis Franchione, won't be slip sliding away. Playing in the toughest division of college football's toughest conference keeps getting in the way of Mack Brown's first league title.

OUR CALL: Blessed with super receivers and difference-making defenders, the Longhorns are a fixture in the Top 10. Anything better depends on their first two league games — Kansas State and Oklahoma.



8. USC

The Boss is Back in the Pac-10

The Trojans broke their pattern of being overrated by coming from back in the pack last season to win a share of the Pac-10 title, demolish Iowa in the Orange Bowl and serve up a Heisman Trophy winner in QB Carson Palmer. If there were a play-off, the Trojans could have — would have? — won it all. Yep, NFL castoff Pete Carroll *loves* college life.

THE GOOD NEWS: With team speed galore, Carroll has built the best defense in the Pac-10 by a wide margin. And there's so much talent on offense — this could be USC's best line in several years — there will be minimal pressure on the new QB to be an immediate superstar.

THE BAD NEWS: The quarterback position could be an adventure all season. The kicking game, which was the culprit in the OT loss at Washington State, still promises to be erratic. For all the supreme quicks on this team, how did it finish 109th nationally in kickoff returns?

OUR CALL: The sleeping giant has awakened. Unless Carroll decides he has unfinished business in the NFL, the Trojans are back to stay, with a chance to end a decade-long reign of parity in the Pac-10.



9. TENNESSEE

Vols Ready to be Tennessee Again

Injuries were only part of the culprit last season, as the Vols' discipline and leadership broke down while the losses piled up in an 8-5 season, the worst of the Phillip Fulmer era. With many of those injured players back, it's the payoff season and pay-back time for those who kicked UT when it was down ... like Florida, Alabama and Miami.

THE GOOD NEWS: With QB Casey Clausen and a host of young runners, the backfield could be the SEC's best. The starting linebackers, led by Kevin Burnett, should be back with a vengeance after missing time because of injuries last season.

THE BAD NEWS: Converted defensive back Mark Jones was a revelation this spring at receiver, but the wideouts have much to prove under fire, as does a rebuilt defensive line. Road games at Auburn, Alabama, Florida and Miami could be killer.

OUR CALL: Here's a hunch that the Vols have repaired their wounded pride, rediscovered toughness and will get an A in chemistry. In short, Tennessee will be Tennessee again.



10. MARYLAND

Take 'Over' Off Achieve and Watch Terps Go

It's time to take the Terps seriously. Very seriously. Maryland overachieved in Ralph Friedgen's first two years as head coach, surprising fans and foes along the way, but now it gets its full due, which comes complete with a big fat bulls eye. With 17 returning starters, the Terps can handle the extra attention.

THE GOOD NEWS: QB Scott McBrien is way more comfortable in his second year in the system, so Friedgen expanded the playbook accordingly. RB Bruce Perry, the 2001 ACC Offensive Player of the Year, is back to full strength. The defense: first rate.

THE BAD NEWS: The Terps have a huge mental hurdle to clear when they play at Florida State in the season's second week. The schools have met 13 times, with the Seminoles winning every one, sweeping the 11 conference games by an average score of 50-15.

OUR CALL: This team is better than the one that won the ACC in 2001 and better than the one that went 11-3 last year, including a Peach Bowl victory. In 2003, the Terps upgrade back into the BCS.



11. LSU

Tigers Entrenched in SEC High-Rent District

It's a rare Louisiana high school recruit that eludes the clutches of coach Nick Saban, which is why the Tigers are going to be contenders in the SEC West for quite some time. Saban makes a fine living off his bayou connections, but to be the top cat in the division this season, he'll need help from the heartland in QB Matt Mauck, an Indiana native.

THE GOOD NEWS: The offense should put up points aplenty. Mauck, who missed the second half of last season, returns to spark the passing game; he'll enjoy throwing to Michael Clayton and Devery Henderson. The O-line has best-in-the-league potential.

THE BAD NEWS: The defense, which finished eighth nationally last season, no longer has linebacker Bradie James as its center of gravity. There's questionable depth at that position and at safety, so injuries in the back seven could create major issues.

OUR CALL: With the Tigers getting Georgia, Florida and Auburn in Death Valley, there is ample opportunity for them to earn BCS love and stay high in the ratings, even with a couple of losses elsewhere.



12. PITTSBURGH

Longing to Play on New Year's Day

The Bluebonnet Bowl. The John Hancock Bowl. The Liberty Bowl. Insight.com. Tangerine. Insight. Those are Pittsburgh's six bowl games in the past 15 years, all of which are a couple sniffs away from New Year's Day glory. Coming off their best season in almost two decades and with 15 returning starters, this season should extend into next year.

THE GOOD NEWS: Man-child receiver Larry Fitzgerald can catch just about anything Rod Rutherford throws out there and could earn All-America honors as a sophomore. A tough, physical defense returns seven starters.

THE BAD NEWS: Rutherford, a senior and second-year starter, can't use the "no experience" excuse anymore. Between last year's interceptions (12), lost fumbles (six) and sacks taken (46!), he needs to make better, quicker decisions for Pitt to be all it can be.

OUR CALL: Coach Walt Harris is building something nice, and with his team's combination of experience, talent and schedule (Miami and Virginia Tech visit Heinz Field), now's the time he finishes the project.



13. GEORGIA

Bad News for SEC: Richt Gets Richer

After taking his team to the top of the SEC mountain, coach Mark Richt has his fellas believing that they can do it again ... and again ... and again. Maybe just not this year, what with the overhaul at linebacker (the Dawgs lose three starters who combined for 281 tackles) and a rebuilding offensive line.

THE GOOD NEWS: The Bulldogs have arguably the top quarterback situation in the nation with starter David Greene and backup D.J. Shockley, as well as the SEC's best receivers, defensive line, secondary and even kicking game. And the coach ain't shabby, either.

THE BAD NEWS: When you have to cancel a spring scrimmage because you don't have enough healthy bodies on the offensive line, that's bad. With all five starters and a couple of key backups gone, all that remains are freshmen and sophomores in the two-deep.

OUR CALL: In the rough SEC, the talented pups on the O-line might have to take some smacks upside the head before the Dawgs get in place to win it all in 2004. And by win it all, yes, we do mean national title.

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14. VIRGINIA TECH

Are Hokies Legit? Check Back in November

Put redshirt freshman quarterback Marcus Vick atop the list of players we really want to see in 2003. The younger brother of some guy named Michael who played a little QB with the Hokies a few years ago, Marcus is said to have the wheels, the cannon, the other-worldly coolness of his brother. And Tech is so good that it might not need him this season.

THE GOOD NEWS: Junior quarterback Bryan Randall is no slouch, and only needs to cut down on the turnovers to become one of the most dangerous dudes around. RB Kevin Jones will thrive in a one-man show at tailback. The defense should be up to V-Tech standards.

THE BAD NEWS: About that defense ... what exactly was Tech doing, twice allowing at least 50 points late in the season? The quarterback situation will be fun to monitor, but there's always a danger of it turning into a team-dividing controversy.

OUR CALL: A 7-0 start is not out of the question, but November — with games vs. Miami, at Pittsburgh and at Virginia — will tell the tale. Anything less than 10 wins would be something of a downer.



15. NOTRE DAME

Construction Zone: Building a Beautiful Thing

For a coach, former Irish boss Bob Davie turned out to be a pretty good TV announcer. For a second-choice replacement, Tyrone Willingham turned out to be the right guy all along. Willingham hasn't had time yet to put the right personnel in all the right places, but when he does, ND won't be settling for a No. 15 preseason ranking.

THE GOOD NEWS: As to be expected, Carlyle Holiday was more comfortable this spring in his second year of the West Coast offense, holding off all challengers to his job. The defense, ranked 13th nationally last season, returns eight starters.

THE BAD NEWS: WR Arnaz Battle, one of the few playmakers on offense, is gone. Four-fifths of the starting offensive line must be replaced. Who needs a conference when the schedule includes Michigan, Purdue, USC, Pittsburgh and Florida State, among others.

OUR CALL: Willingham squeezed every bit of production from his team last season and spun it into a mostly golden 10-3 season. A repeat performance will be just fine with even better days ahead in 2004.



16. PURDUE

Steadily Steaming Toward Bowl Season

Consider the Boilers to be this season's Iowa. The Hawkeyes, in 2001, lost their five games by a total of 27 points before turning close losses into a breakthrough 10-win season in 2002. Purdue lost its six games last season by a slim margin of 26 points. Making up that difference this season is definitely doable; in fact, it's probable.

THE GOOD NEWS: After finishing 105th nationally in total offense in 2001, Joe Tiller's attack was back last season, and he returns all the key skill people involved in averaging 30 points a game. Overall, 17 starters are back, including nine on a better-than-you-think defense.

THE BAD NEWS: Three new starters on the offensive line could undermine the offensive progress and the team's upward mobility. Nagging question: What if this group of guys just doesn't know how to win the close games?

OUR CALL: The whuppin' the Boilers put on Washington in the Sun Bowl after trailing 17-0 was a sign of things to come. Games at Ohio State and Michigan preclude the league crown, but a nice bowl awaits.



17. WASHINGTON

Truth is, Signs Point to Pac-10 Title for Dawgs

No lie, Rick Neuheisel has used his cache of goodwill with fans and athletic department officials after his brazen deception of his involvement with the San Francisco 49ers head coaching vacancy. Lucky for him, with QB Cody Pickett and WR Reggie Williams all grown up, this is the season Washington has been pointing to, with an all-is-forgiven Pac-10 title in reach.

THE GOOD NEWS: For the past 11 seasons, the Pac-10 championship has been led by a senior or fourth-year junior who is often the league MVP. The guy who best fits the criteria this season is Cody Pickett, who plays in an offense in which he should post gonzo numbers.

THE BAD NEWS: Isn't Washington a *football* school? Talented CB Nate Robinson gave up football to concentrate on hoops, leaving a hole in the secondary. Senior RB Rich Alexis and the running game has been a bust the past two years. Is redshirt freshman Kenny James the answer?

OUR CALL: After a season opener at Ohio State (chalk it up as a learning experience), the schedule sets up nicely for the Huskies, who have the horses to outscore everyone en route to Pasadena paydirt.



18. FLORIDA STATE

Scouts Honor — Seminoles Plenty Dangerous

With a gambling probe leading the parade of FSU off-field indiscretions, has Bobby Bowden, at age 73, lost his grip on the program that he directed to two national titles and a 152-19 record from 1987 through 2000? His foes would like to think he's hip-deep in quicksand ... and they might be right considering nine losses in the past two seasons.

THE GOOD NEWS: Let's be serious, now. These guys are the defending ACC champs, and for all the legal turmoil and uneven play on the field, don't you think every coach in the league, whether they would admit it publicly or not, would trade teams with FSU?

THE BAD NEWS: With fewer easy outs in conference play, Florida State might do well to tone down the non-league schedule, which, dadgum it, consists of home games against Colorado and Miami and trips to Notre Dame and Florida. Yeesh.

OUR CALL: OK, so the Seminoles aren't exactly Eagle Scouts. This is news? They're still capable of rolling out of bed and winning the ACC, although that's far from the slam dunk it used to be.



19. NORTH CAROLINA STATE

Rising Pack Has Skills That Fit the Bill

One of the reasons for Florida State's slump is that longtime Seminoles assistant Chuck Amato moved on to Raleigh, where his teams preceded to 1) become the first ACC team to beat FSU in Tallahassee and 2) beat the Seminoles again last season. Now, if Amato can find a way to beat Georgia Tech and Maryland, he might really have something.

THE GOOD NEWS: With a 3,000-yard passer (Philip Rivers), a 1,000-yard rusher (T.A. McLendon) and a 1,000-yard receiver (Jerricho Cotchery), no team has a finer triumvirate of skill position players. Overall team speed is even better than in last year's 11-win season.

THE BAD NEWS: The Pack must replace the guts of a defense that allowed a mere 22 points in the final three games against high-class foes Virginia, Florida State and Notre Dame. The kicking game is too unreliable for Amato's comfort.

OUR CALL: We can't quite buy the Pack's national title talk (an early game at Ohio State will be telling), but N.C. State will be right there in the ACC if speedy and talented newcomers come through on defense.



20. COLORADO STATE

Rams Talk Tough, Play Tougher

The Rams steamrolled through the Mountain West last season ... until there were 46 seconds left in the season. That's when UNLV scored a touchdown to pull out a 36-33 upset, robbing Sonny Lubick's team of its first perfect conference record. It all just means that there is unfinished business to keep CSU's 16 returning starters motivated in 2003.

THE GOOD NEWS: QB Bradlee Van Pelt is the catalyst, a run-pass threat with a linebacker's bad attitude. He's a big talker who gets on opponents' nerves, but he's the kind of guy you love if he's on your team. On defense, the linebackers are all seniors, all three-year starters.

THE BAD NEWS: The defensive front went south at the end of last season, as the Rams allowed 773 rushing yards in the last three games. There are depth concerns on the line this season. If no one emerges at running back, can Van Pelt keep defenses honest with his arm?

OUR CALL: Van Pelt's antics led one columnist to proclaim CSU as Classless State University. Bah. No team in the West is as consistently tough as the Rams, who have won three league titles in four years.



21. VIRGINIA

Big Things Looming for this Groh Operation

Now, it's hard to find anyone questioning Al Groh's decision a couple of years back to give up his head coaching job with the New York Jets to go back to school. Surrounding himself with assistants flush with pro experience, Groh has his alma mater on the brink of what could be one of the best stretches in school history. Good decision, indeed.

THE GOOD NEWS: 17 starters are back from a 9-5 team, including QB Matt Schaub, who came out of nowhere to earn ACC Player of the Year honors. Groh has so many good, young players it's ridiculous; LB Ahmad Brooks will make his much-anticipated debut.

THE BAD NEWS: Teams that rank 100th nationally in total defense — as the Wahoos did last season — don't often get to play in the biggest bowls. Schaub will miss being able to throw the jump ball to big, tall receiver Billy McMullen.

OUR CALL: It's hard to find any team with as much young potential at linebacker as Virginia. With the schedule backloaded with toughies, the defense has a chance to grow up before things get serious.



22. COLORADO

Barnett Hand Steady on Rebuilding Buffs

That Gary Barnett was able to coax nine wins and a repeat Big 12 North title out of a team that lost its starting quarterback early last season is a testament to his coaching skills. It's that acumen that has earned him the benefit of the doubt this season, despite some major reconstruction and a too-tough schedule.

THE GOOD NEWS: Even with the departure of Chris Brown and transfer of Marcus Houston, the Buffs are chock-full of RBs, led by Bobby Purify and Brian Calhoun. The defense builds around standouts such as S Medford Moorhead, DE Gabe Nyenhuis and LB Sean Tufts.

THE BAD NEWS: Barnett has been able to patch together serviceable quarterback play the past couple of years, but now he's scraping the bottom of the experience barrel and can't quite rule out a pair of incoming freshmen. More problems: Four new offensive linemen.

OUR CALL: A three-peat of the Big 12 North title? Don't think so, but Barnett has had fine seasons with lesser talent. The Buffs will win just enough of their big games to keep them hanging around the rankings.



23. ARIZONA STATE

Deep Attack Leads Devil Uprising

The only knock on third-year coach Dirk Koetter so far is this: What the heck was he thinking not starting Andrew Walter from the get-go last season? Walter, despite not starting until the fifth game, had the most prolific season in school history: 274 of 483 for 3,877 yards and 28 TDs. And he's only a junior.

THE GOOD NEWS: Arizona State's offense might be the best go-deep attack in college; the Devils averaged 32 points a game last season and return nine starters on that side. The offensive line, almost always an ASU strength, returns intact. Athletic secondary leads defense.

THE BAD NEWS: If not for the early departures of All-Universe DE Terrell Suggs and go-to WR Shaun McDonald, the Devils might be the consensus pick to stick a pitchfork in the rest of the Pac-10. As is, both positions are something of a question heading into fall.

OUR CALL: After a shaky first season, Koetter proved in 2002 why he was so in demand as the prototypical 21st century hire — a young guy who knows how to coach offense. ASU is on the right path.



24. TCU

Frogs Focus on Busting Up BCS Party

It's straight out of the bizzaro world of college football: No Florida, Nebraska, Penn State or Texas A&M in the preseason Top 25 ... but TCU? Whether the Horned Frogs would actually beat any or all of those teams is up for offseason debate (chat among yourselves), but as the defending and projected C-USA champs, they belong in the discussion.

THE GOOD NEWS: The Frogs have one of the nation's finest young backfields with QB Tye Gunn (4-0 as starter before suffering a knee injury), 1,000-yard rusher Lonta Hobbs and redshirt freshman RB Robert Merrill. Oh yeah, the defense is aces ... as usual.

THE BAD NEWS: Five starters are gone from a defense that led the nation in total defense. That's not a devastating exodus, but the hammer of that defense — LaMarcus McDonald — must be replaced. Gunn missed spring while recovering from his knee injury.

OUR CALL: BCS buster alert! There's not a game on the schedule that TCU can't win. Yeah, yeah ... the Frogs aren't likely to skate through unscathed, but a sixth consecutive bowl is a lock.



25. ALABAMA

Good Line, Good QB ... Who Needs A Coach?

Well, yes, this pick was made before coach Mike Price's out-of-bounds off-field activities and subsequent firing on May 3, but there is good reason to stand by it. The front-line talent is still strong and there's always a chance that the players' character — forged by a river of adversity — could bond this team into a mentally tough outfit.

THE GOOD NEWS: We're suckers for teams with good — potentially great — offensive lines, and that's what 'Bama has. With that line and sophomore quarterback's Brodie Croyle's arm, perhaps this team can just draw up plays in the dirt and still score. Who needs a coach?

THE BAD NEWS: There's still an NCAA bowl ban and scholarship limitations in place from infractions that occurred during the watch of Mike DuBose, whose dismissal in 2000 started the chain of events that has led to four coaches in four seasons at Alabama.

OUR CALL: Alabama has made a mess of a lot of things, from rules violations to bad hirings to questionable firings. How the administration and players handle this season will be telling for the future.

RATING THE TEAMS 1-117

1. Oklahoma	6. Auburn	11. LSU	16. Purdue	21. Virginia
2. Miami	7. Texas	12. Pittsburgh	17. Washington	22. Colorado
3. Ohio State	8. USC	13. Georgia	18. Florida State	23. Arizona State
4. Michigan	9. Tennessee	14. Virginia Tech	19. North Carolina State	24. TCU
5. Kansas State	10. Maryland	15. Notre Dame	20. Colorado State	25. Alabama

26. Florida	Gad-Zooks! Gators have to play way back into Top 25.	72. Bowling Green	QB Josh Harris one of league's best in super year for QBs.
27. Oklahoma State	Cowboys have Sooners' number, and adding other teams.	73. UNLV	Expectations are low ... so Rebels are dangerous.
28. Texas A&M	Won't be long before Coach Fran has Aggies in Top 25.	74. Northwestern	Showed spark last season that bodes well for future.
29. Wisconsin	Return of Lee Evans makes everyone smile in Madison.	75. New Mexico State	With showdown vs. UNT in home finale, could make a run.
30. Oregon State	Welcome back, Mike Riley ... losing is no longer acceptable.	76. Utah	Vroom, vroom ... Urban Meyer's spread offense arrives.
31. Arkansas	Defending West champs ignored again in preseason.	77. Vanderbilt	Streak of 17 SEC losses should end this season ... but when?
32. Iowa	Brad Banks was difference-maker, but Hawks have winning attitude.	78. Boise State	League road games keep Broncos from successful title defense.
33. Ole Miss	Eli's career lament: Just not enough defense for SEC title.	79. Connecticut	More than a stadium, Huskies are building a nice program.
34. Nebraska	Will staff changes be the ticket ... or is it desperation?	80. Middle Tennessee	Injuries can't be as bad as they were in '02 ... can they?
35. Missouri	Too early for the Brad Smith for Heisman campaign?	81. Toledo	Huge line clears way for another run at MAC West title.
36. Penn State	JoePa young enough for another big run, but must reload.	82. Duke	ACC losing streak is 25; no Devil has experienced a league win.
37. UCLA	Pieces in place for surprise run under new coach Karl Dorrell.	83. Indiana	Former Golden Domer Matt Lovecchio takes over at QB.
38. Minnesota	QB Asad Abdul Khaliq could be the surprise of the Big Ten.	84. Kansas	Has coach Mark Mangino bitten off more than he can chew?
39. Oregon	Better QB play will mean a first-division finish in Pac-10.	85. Northern Illinois	With RB Michael Turner, could break through to win MAC West.
40. West Virginia	No-huddle offense is finally fully installed, so look out!	86. Rutgers	Finally positioned to end record 22-game league losing streak.
41. Southern Miss	Eagles chase C-USA crown with LB Rod Davis, tough D.	87. East Carolina	New coach John Thompson has some rebuilding to do.
42. Marshall	Herd still finds a way, even in the post-Leftwich era.	88. Temple	Tough to recruit when Big East membership expires after '04.
43. Boston College	QB issues make getting to fifth straight bowl a chore.	89. Miami (Ohio)	Shootouts galore with QB Ben Roethlisberger and suspect "D"
44. Washington St.	No Price, no Gesser. Cougs' down cycle has begun.	90. Troy State	Too-tough schedule puts major improvement out of reach.
45. New Mexico	RB DonTrell Moore and defense have Lobos rising.	91. Nevada	Most experienced team in WAC, but big wins are too few.
46. Wake Forest	Deacs have serious momentum after routing Oregon in bowl.	92. Western Michigan	Trying to re-flex muscles after two consecutive losing seasons.
47. Texas Tech	Replacing marquee players on both sides of the ball.	93. Baylor	Check back in 2004 when Guy Morriss has system in place.
48. Air Force	Looking for another fast start, but without the collapse.	94. Wyoming	Joe Glenn inherits 17 starters and a two-win season.
49. Tulane	Explosive offense, led by a pro-type QB J.P. Losman.	95. Akron	Lee Owens should be able to move further away from hot seat.
50. Hawaii	Can QB Timmy Chang stay healthy enough to lead WAC title run?	96. SMU	Aren't too far removed from WAC's upper echelon.
51. Clemson	Tommy Bowden needs something good to happen.	97. Louisiana Tech	At least QB Luke McCown keeps things interesting.
52. Central Florida	Hot-throwing Ryan Schneider has Knights on verge of MAC title.	98. UAB	Firepower could get Blazers into post-season action.
53. South Carolina	Have Gamecocks peaked? Talented, but very young.	99. Memphis	RB DeAngelo Williams offers reason for excitement.
54. BYU	Balancing offense, trying to show '02 was 1-year dip.	100. San Jose State	Third year not a charm for gritty head coach Fitz Hill.
55. Georgia Tech	Time for Chan Gailey to work his magic with QB Damarious Bilbo.	101. Central Michigan	Progress has been slow but steady for Chippewas.
56. Fresno State	Dreaded Honolulu trip keeps Bulldogs from league championship.	102. Arkansas State	Improvement stilted by inability to score points.
57. Stanford	Athletic and now-experienced defense gives Cards a chance.	103. Louisiana-Lafayette	Rickey Bustle has Cajuns on right path, but trip may take awhile.
58. Illinois	Squeezing into a bowl isn't out of the question.	104. Rice	With only three starters back, defense young, untested.
59. Iowa State	Bad second half to 2002 figures to bleed into 2003.	105. Ball State	Could be better if adjustments to coach Brady Hoke go well.
60. Syracuse	Should improve from 4-8, but that's not saying much.	106. Houston	Cougars live in perpetual rebuilding mode.
61. North Texas	Third straight SBC title with defense, confidence, continuity.	107. Utah State	New Sun Belt member wouldn't mind breaking even.
62. Cincinnati	Bearcats look for fourth straight bowl trip.	108. Navy	Defense needs to play better, but option offense often purrs.
63. Kentucky	Will score under Rich Brooks, but shaky "D" makes bowl unlikely.	109. Kent	Dean Pees running out of time after 12-44 five-year record.
64. Louisville	Vast personnel changes mean six-bowl streak in jeopardy.	110. UTEP	Jordan Palmer, Carson's brother, might get shot at QB.
65. San Diego State	Crafty Aztecs could jump into MWC contention.	111. Idaho	Not enough defense, not enough running game, not enough wins.
66. California	Year 2 will be tougher for Jeff Tedford than Year 1.	112. Ohio	Young offense not likely to reach maturity until 2004 season.
67. Michigan State	New coach John L. Smith brings renewed enthusiasm.	113. Louisiana-Monroe	Post-spring coaching change ended modest momentum.
68. Mississippi State	Has Jackie Sherrill lost his touch? This season will tell a lot.	114. Army	Just 7-27 in C-USA games since joining league.
69. North Carolina	Brutal early schedule will make it difficult to gauge improvement.	115. Tulsa	It's hard to shake that losing feeling; Tulsa won once in 2002.
70. Arizona	Could be good in 2004, but Mackovic needs good 2003.	116. Eastern Michigan	Last year's defense among worst in NCAA history.
71. South Florida	Won't be long before C-USA newcomer is C-USA power.	117. Buffalo	It's not like this is something new for Bulls.

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A3	REDSKINS (-3)	49'ERS	38-7	W	BLOWOUT!
A9	COWBOYS (-3)	RAIDERS	20-6	W	BLOWOUT!
A10	BROWNS (+3 1/2)	VIKES	27-15	W	UPSET!
A15	SAINTS (+2 1/2)	DOLPHINS	24-7	W	UPSET!
A17	FALCONS (-3)	GIANTS	36-24	W	EASY VICK-TORY!
A22	CHARGERS (+6 1/2)	RAMS	31-10	W	UPSET!

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S8	DOLPHINS (-8)	LIONS	49-23	W	BLOWOUT!
S14	NEVADA (+14)	BYU	31-28	W	UPSET!
S14	PENN ST (+5)	NEBR	40-7	W	UPSET!
S14	USC (+2 1/2)	COLORADO	40-3	W	UPSET!
S14	CARDS(+3 1/2)	S'HAWKS	24-13	W	UPSET!

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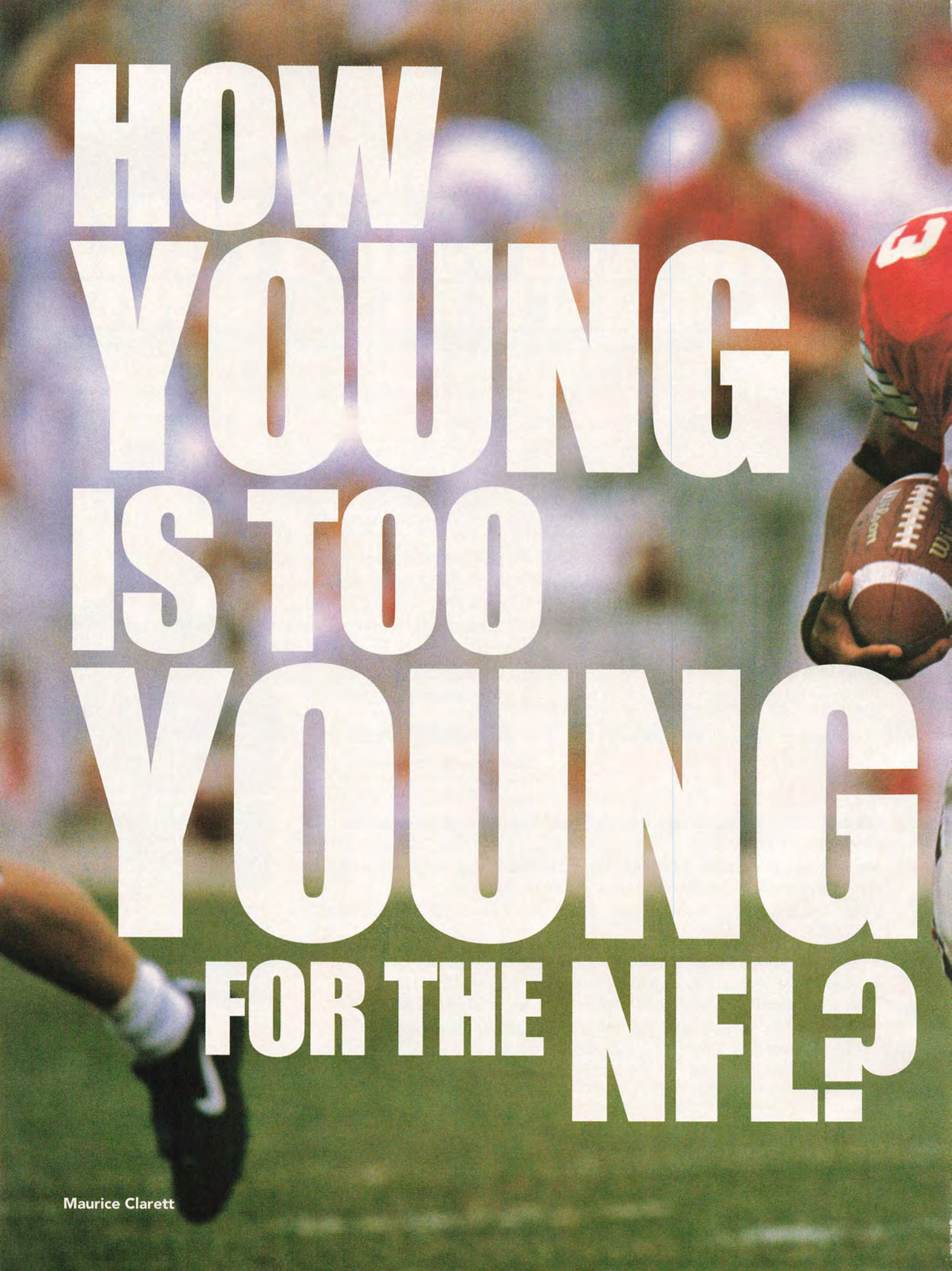
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HOW YOUNG IS TOO YOUNG FOR THE NFL?

Maurice Clarett



LEGAL BARRIER TO EARLIER ADMISSION TO THE DRAFT COULD CRUMBLE SOON

BY DENNIS DODD

Get a good look this season.

Remember fondly the power and finesse of Ohio State's Maurice Clarett.

Marvel at the smooth-as-Merlot moves of USC's Mike Williams.

Soon we might be saying goodbye to these and other players after their sophomore seasons.

The question is becoming how long will the NFL have to wait for young players? If either Clarett or Williams — or any other supremely talented sophomore — musters the gumption and hires a lawyer to challenge the NFL Draft by-laws, the wait won't be long.

Clarett hinted at challenging them last season after his freshman season. He backed off, but the confluence of an ever-improving human body and our litigious society makes it almost inevitable that we're closing in on the first one-and-done college football player.

"A guy like Mike Williams at USC, are you telling me that guy couldn't play in the NFL? Reggie Williams at Washington?" Arizona State coach Dirk Koetter said, citing two Pac-10 stars. "There's got to be somebody to challenge it. Somebody."

Somebody soon will, experts say, if for no other reason than the mind and body of today's 19-year-old elite athlete can take the mental and physical pounding of professional football. When the right circumstances converge, the NFL's legal foundation will crumble quicker than the Cincinnati Bengals in the fourth quarter.

"At some point someone is going to challenge (the NFL) and win," said Gary Roberts, the Tulane Law School deputy dean and noted sports law expert. "It just depends on the circumstances."

The current system is in place essentially because by all accounts, personal maturity, life skills and education (beyond the classroom) are far better gained in a college environment than on an NFL roster.

JOE ROBBINS



KEVIN REECE

USC's Mike Williams has the talent for the NFL. But it is still unknown who will tackle the legal system first.

But who's to say it's appropriate and legally correct for a basketball player, or a software engineer, or an artist, or a writer, or just about anybody else in society, to at least try to earn a living as soon as they are good enough... but a football player must wait for this artificially constructed timeline to run its course?

Buried in the NFL constitution and by-laws is a paragraph titled, "Special Eligibility," which allows college juniors (or their equivalent) to be selected in the draft. Since 1990, the rule has symbolized the friendliest of handshakes between the NCAA and professional football.

- The NFL doesn't want to draft underclassmen.
- The NCAA doesn't want its rosters and classrooms raided, much like they have been in basketball.

The result is that this 108-word paragraph in the NFL's commandments has been preserving the order in both sports.

It reads, in part: "Applications (for the draft) will be accepted only for college players for whom at least three full college seasons have elapsed since their high-school graduation."

This year, 45 juniors forfeited their final season of college eligibility (or two for redshirt sophomores) in hopes of striking it rich as a professional. That it is entirely likely that they won't become

immediately wealthy is hardly the issue. (More on that later).

The point is they believed someone would draft them, and it's their personal decision whether they take that leap.

There were probably a half-dozen freshmen and sophomores in 2002 that the NFL likely would have scooped up had they been eligible. The list includes Claret, the two Williams receivers and Michigan cornerback Marlin Jackson ... all of whom go into 2003 as preseason All-Americans.

How long, then, are you able to keep them down on the farm? The farm being college football, which, in essence, is a minor league for the NFL.

"If he's a (freshman or sophomore) Heisman Trophy winner it would be implausible that he wouldn't be in the first seven rounds of the draft," Roberts said. "It's a funny issue because frankly I don't think the NFL cares that much.

"The reason they keep the rule is to avoid all the college coaches coming down on them. They're, in fact, protecting their farm system. There's hardly any kids before their junior years they really want.

"On the other hand," Roberts went on, "one might come along and they've got nothing against taking them other than the fact that their farm system (the college programs and coaches) doesn't want it."

So what would set off a legal challenge to "Special Eligibility?" A rare set of circumstances, Roberts and other experts said. But those circumstances already are aligning.

"First, you'd file a lawsuit and seek a preliminary injunction," he said.

Finding a judge who would issue that injunction, though, could start a chain of legal events that could tie up the issue for years. The NFL might doggedly defend its constitution in court. But if a freshman or sophomore wins an injunction and is declared eligible for the draft, the lawsuit might be dropped. That could be the end of the story for that player — and perhaps the issue.

"Which would in effect make the preliminary injunction the precedent that a later court might or might not follow," Roberts said. "Alternatively, the courts might say, 'Look, this guy is now playing in the NFL and because it could arise again, we're not going to dismiss (the lawsuit).' You don't know."

There were at least 15 underclassmen who dominated at their positions in 2002.

- Claret rushed for almost 1,200 yards less than a year after leaving high school a semester early.
- Scouts already are salivating over Miami safety Sean Taylor, who has the build of a linebacker, speed of a receiver and hitting ability of a Butkus. He's now a junior.
- Miami tight end Kellen Winslow Jr., a sophomore at the time, arguably was the best player on the field in the Fiesta Bowl, catching 11 passes for 122 yards.
- Georgia defensive end David Pollack was one of the backbones of the Bulldogs' SEC championship defense as a sophomore.

Were they ready for the NFL? Sure, but for whatever reason, their college upside outweighed their legal leanings. Claret, for

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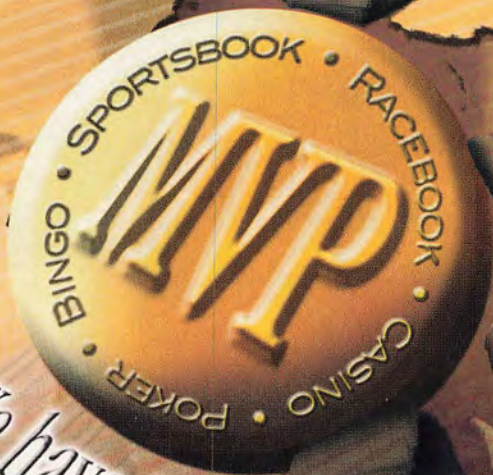
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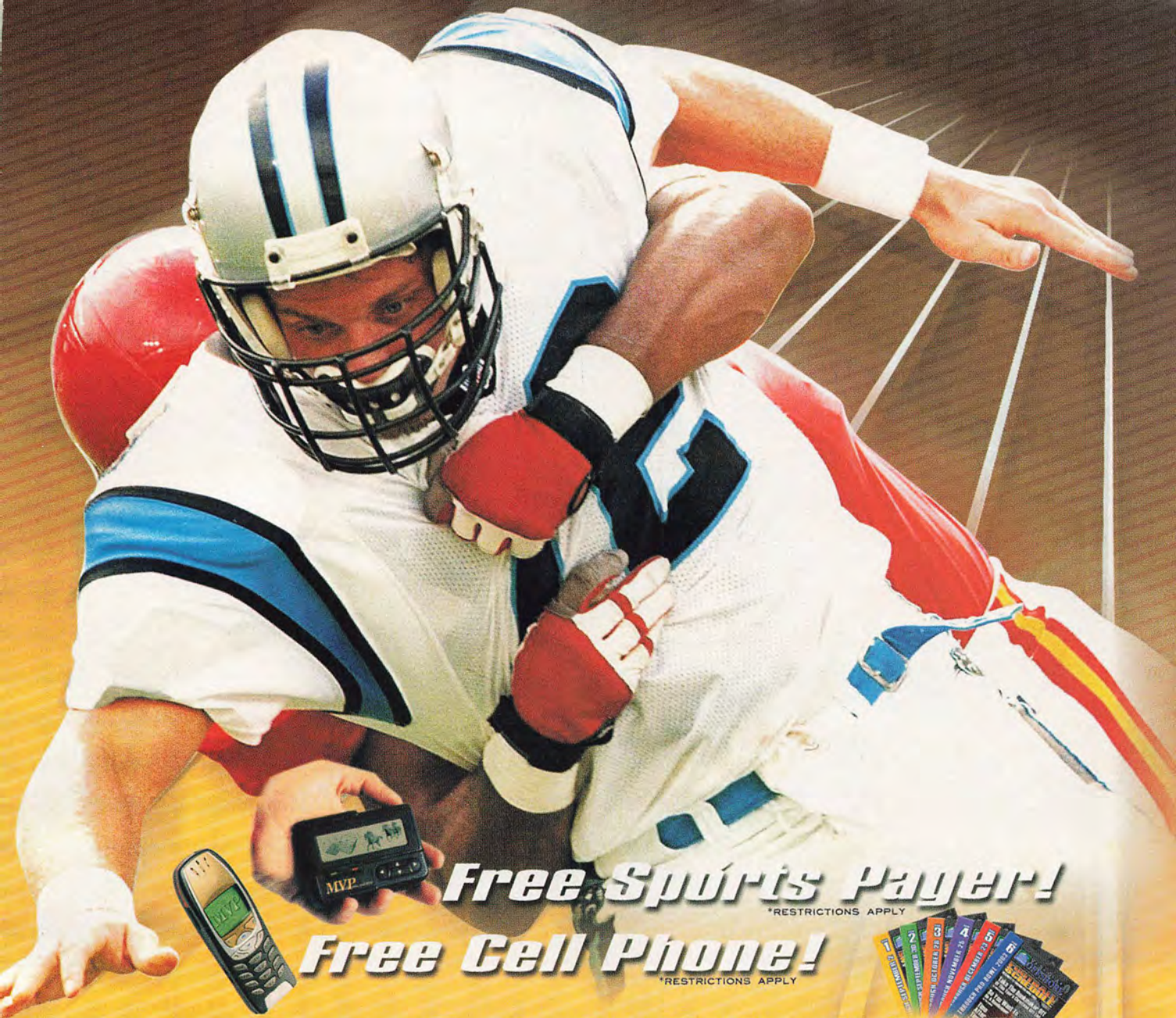
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HOW DOES THE NFL COMPARE TO OTHER SPORTS?

The NFL is unique in that it has the most restrictive draft rules of all pro sports. All six other major sports surveyed allow athletes to be drafted, sign a contract and/or compete by age 18 ... except football.

■ PRO BOWLERS ASSOCIATION

Bowling is interesting in that it is performance-based. To turn pro, a bowler must have a 200 average in 66 sanctioned games over a two-year period. College status is not a factor.

- Bowlers can turn pro at 18 without parental consent.
- Bowlers between 14 and 18 must have a letter of permission from their parents.

■ MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

Baseball has a somewhat complicated arrangement that saves players the annual pressures of "whether they'll go pro or not," which also reduces the players' flexibility. It's a system that protects the teams at universities and junior colleges from being in danger of losing any player to the pro ranks in any given year.

- Free agents (outside the U.S.) must be 16 in order to sign a professional contract.
- High school players are eligible for the draft after their senior year.
- Players enrolling in a four-year college or university must wait until the first draft after their 21st birthday — in most cases that is after their junior year.
- Junior college players are eligible for the draft after their freshman year.

■ NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

- U.S. players are not eligible for the draft until their high school class has graduated.
- Foreign players must be 18 to be draft eligible.

■ NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

Draftable players must be 18 in that draft year to be eligible. For example, to be drafted this year, a North American player must turn 18 by Sept. 15. College and major juniors not drafted by the time they turn 18 must wait until age 20 to go back into the draft.

■ TENNIS

- ATP (Men) — Under 14 years of age, players are not eligible to play in ATP events. At age 14, players are eligible for a limited number of tournaments. To play the full ATP Tour, players must be 16.
- WTA (Women) — The women's tour has the most complicated, yet most comprehensive, age requirements. Players can participate on a limited basis for exhibitions and ITF events at age 14. At age 15, girls can compete in a maximum of eight WTA Tour events. At 16 it becomes 10 and at 17 it rises to 13. A woman can play a full schedule once she turns 18. For younger players, the WTA has widespread health plans, limits media access and has mentoring programs. Those younger than 18, for example, must meet ongoing minimum educational requirements in school.

■ GOLF

Both the PGA and LPGA have a minimum age requirement of 18 to join their tours full time. However, younger players can play in selected events because of a sponsor's exemption or an invitation to an open tournament.

■ NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

- Players are not eligible for the draft until three years after their high school class has graduated.

— Dennis Dodd

one, went from saying he was "looking into" challenging the NFL in an interview with a national magazine, to getting in lockstep with the NFL view.

"I don't really think it's physically possible to go to the next level after your freshman year," Claret said. "There's so much to learn."

More than can be learned through a sophomore season?

But, as with the NBA, sometimes the learning curve is not the point. If a player is draft eligible and some team is willing to draft him, it doesn't matter. A marriage is made.

"As far as freshmen and sophomores go with the NFL, it depends on the position," said Texas receiver Roy Williams, who is returning for his senior season. "I don't think you can take a quarterback after his freshman year and put him in the NFL. As far as receivers, all you have to do is learn the offense, learn the defense, you'll be fine. I would say DBs and receivers can do it easier than any other position."

Both NFL and college football types don't want to consider the possibility.

The physical and maturity arguments brought up so often are similar to the ones heard around the NBA 30 years ago. But in the mid-1970s when Bill Willoughby, Darryl Dawkins and Moses

Malone became the first high schoolers in the modern era to jump straight to the pros, the barn door opened.

While there are fewer than a dozen high schoolers that have reached true NBA stardom since then, the practice of taking underclassmen (or being powerless to stop from taking them) has led to an evolutionary revolution.

At the least, the learning curve has been flattened since the day of Willoughby, Dawkins and Malone. Two of the best point guards in NBA history — Magic Johnson and Isiah Thomas — played only two college seasons.

Nine of the 15 players on the 2001-02 all-NBA team played two years or less of college basketball. That's 60 percent of the league's best players having less than three years of college basketball experience. In 2001, three of the top four NBA picks were straight out of high school.

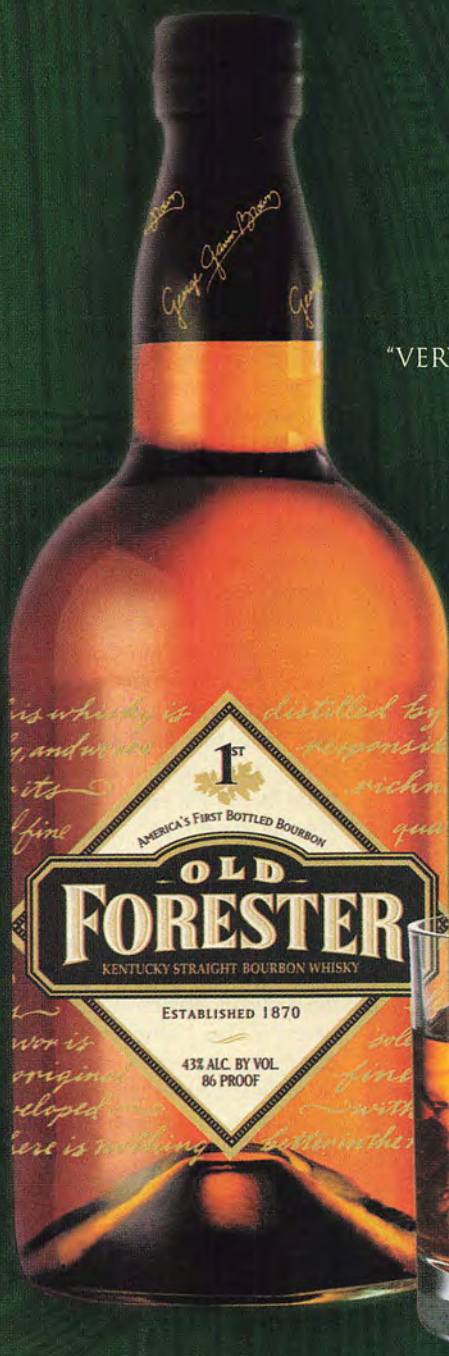
Could professional football be headed for a similar revolution 10, 20, 30 years down the line?

"Pro football is a different setup than pro basketball," Walsh said. "However, I think that the guys who come out of high school that have the physical bodies can succeed right away."

Certainly, no one is suggesting high schoolers are ready for the NFL. But the netherworld between high school graduation

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RD MOORE

Seven years before juniors were allowed to be drafted,

Herschel Walker rushed for 1,812 yards in his first pro season.

and the beginning of the junior year in college certainly is ripe for plucking if someone wanted to take on the legal challenge. The physical challenge already has been met.

An underclassman draft was barely a topic of discussion before Herschel Walker. Georgia's superstar running back gave up his senior year at Georgia in 1983 to turn pro in the United States Football League. Seven years before juniors were allowed to be drafted in the NFL, Walker rushed for 1,812 yards in his first pro season.

Walker was a physical freak, but his exploits at least allowed others to consider that such young players could succeed as professionals. In 1980, Walker ran for a then-NCAA freshman record of 1,616 yards, leading Georgia to the national championship.

"Football is an unusual sport in that there are not a lot of kids who are physically ready (for the NFL)," Roberts said. "Most of them know that. But every once in a while you get a Herschel Walker or a Maurice Clarett who either is or think they are. At some point in time, somebody might come along and challenge it."

The USFL folded and ever since pro coaches haven't wanted to be put into the position of evaluating and drafting younger players. The subject is so taboo on both sides that it scares the principals. When asked about an underclass draft, NFL director of football operations Gene Washington literally backtracked in a hallway at the American Football Coaches Association in January.

"I have no comment on that," he said.

On the college side, the NFL being able to take younger players would wreak havoc with building rosters and the NCAA's graduation rates. College basketball's grad rates are lowest among the major sports, in part because of underclassmen leaving for the pros.

"Otherwise, you're into something that they (NFL) don't seem to want to do — draft them and give them three or four years to develop," Walsh said. "They sign their guys to play this year. We may be signing guys to play two years from now."

Even in its simplest form, Roberts said, a challenge could have as many outcomes as Joan Rivers has had facelifts.

"Once the player goes to the NFL, the player might drop the lawsuit," Roberts said. "It doesn't matter to him anymore. Then it would be up to somebody else to fund it. There's all kinds of scenarios."

Dennis Cross was the lead attorney against the NCAA on the restricted-earnings case that won more than \$50 million for a

group of assistant coaches whose salaries were capped at \$16,000 by the association.

"If you were to look at the NFL like the NCAA ... as a combination of employers who get together and agree not to hire a certain category of employees, then you've got an anti-trust case. But there are a lot of 'ifs' there."

The NFL Players Association called the existing underclass draft structure "a risky proposition," on its own website. Since the NFL rule went into effect in 1990 only two-thirds of the juniors have even been drafted. Counting undrafted free agents who signed contracts, 25 percent of the early draftees were never offered an NFL contract.

The NFLPA calculated the odds at 70 percent against any early entrant into the draft being taken in the first round. That is significant because the first round is where the "big money" is. The average first-rounder in 2000 earned \$1.5 million per year. That figure drops to \$650,000 for the second round, down to the league minimum of \$200,000 for undrafted free agents.

The NFLPA cites the 1990 draft, the first year juniors were allowed to come out. It focused on three of the five running backs taken in the first round — one senior (Blair Thomas) and two juniors (Rodney Hampton and Emmitt Smith). Both juniors played at least eight seasons. Thomas lasted only six seasons but made more than \$1 million more per season than each of the two juniors on their original contracts.

"I don't think anybody realizes how hard it is to play in the NFL," said draft consultant Gil Brandt, the former vice president of player personnel for the Dallas Cowboys. "To me when somebody like Clarett says that he can come in and play, I just don't see that. It's not only physical, it's mental. Players have no idea how complicated the systems are."

Tennessee coach Phil Fulmer helped develop NCAA legislation that extended the declaration deadline for juniors until the second week of January. After that, they have a safety net of 72 hours to change their minds. That's much more appealing than the previous system. After the 2001 season, Fulmer was burned when receiver Donte Stallworth declared for the draft by the early January deadline, then changed his mind. An appeal to the NCAA was denied and Stallworth lost his college eligibility.

Fulmer, who has lost several juniors to the NFL, is philosophical about losing freshmen or sophomores.

"If someone challenged it, quite likely it would take two or three years to get out of court," Fulmer said. "By then, they're past their prime anyway. Our sport is constantly changing. We would adjust as we've had to adjust in the past."

USC coach Pete Carroll is adamant against his young players leaving early. As a former NFL coach, he has drafted juniors. As a college coach, he would blanch at losing his budding superstar, Mike Williams. As a freshman Williams caught 81 passes for 1,265 last year, helping lead the Trojans to the Orange Bowl.

"The pressure of it, the level of focus and seriousness are beyond their years," Carroll said. "They're not ready for it yet. In general, it's not their time."

Unless someone, somewhere, some time finds a willing lawyer and a friendly judge. ■

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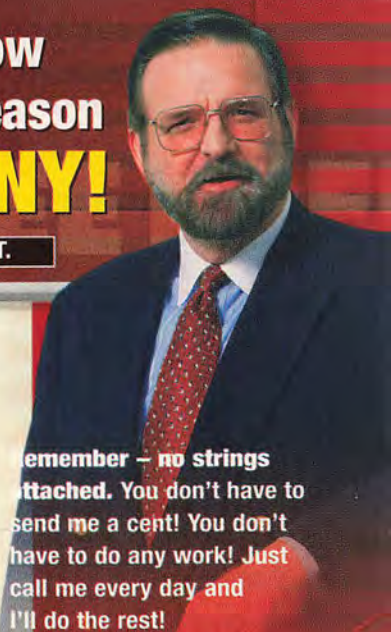
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HOW THE NCAA IS BETRAYING ITS TRADITION

BY DENNIS DODD
ILLUSTRATION BY FRANK CUMMINGS

It's been a cliché for most of the past millennium, but when somebody said, "throw the record book out the window," last year the NCAA stat geeks suddenly took it as an order.

College football's number crunchers usually are buried in spreadsheets, minding the nation's numbers while minding their own business. But what they did last year was the equivalent of ordering a mob hit on the sport's tradition.

You might not even have heard about it, but NCAA football record keeping changed significantly and probably forever in 2002. NCAA statisticians, almost arbitrarily, decided to start counting postseason numbers among their football statistics.

Decades of football record keeping changed in a finger snap. Pocket protectors won out over pass protection.

Since 1869, or just about the time Princeton played Rutgers, bowl games — and in lower divisions, playoff games — have never counted. They were a unique part of the season, games played weeks after the regular season had ended. But now they count.

What's more, in changing its record keeping, the NCAA decided it was going to start the new policy cold turkey.

No retroactive updating of numbers. No researching old bowls and games to make sure that the records are, you know ... real.

It was bad enough a 12th game was added to the schedule last season and this season. And it's worse that overtime stats can help to skew stats. And then there are those pesky league championship games.

Clearly, adding the bowl games to season and career records — which can be the 13th, 14th, and in some cases, even 15th game in a team's season — upsets the comparative balance. Players in 2003 will have 20-30 percent more statistical opportunities (that is, two to four more games) than their football predecessors.

That, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, is overkill.

We can see the ads for the new book now:

"Modernized to emphasize longer season!"

"New format reduces old, moldy records!"

"Current stars favored over outdated ancient legends!"

"The book that'll help you to tell Grandpa to shut up about the old days!"

You get the idea.

The suggestion that bowl games be included is not new. After all, it's a reasonable premise: They played the games, why not count the stats and records?

But the decision and how it was handed down rocked the world of sports information directors, the folks whose job it is to keep track of their school's stats and records.

"I don't have a problem with including postseason games," said Max Corbet of Boise State and a past president of the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA). "I just think you need to go back and make an honest effort and dig up all the past history of that. Starting it now ... you'll always have asterisks."

Jim Wright, the veteran NCAA statistician mainly responsible for the move, says the decision makes perfect sense. Football is the only NCAA sport in which postseason stats don't count. As for updating those numbers in the process to give them some semblance of legitimacy ...

"Even if we had the wherewithal to figure out all these records, it wouldn't be fair to essentially go back and re-create history," Wright said.

"Whoever led the nation in rushing, even last year, that's who should be the guy. We shouldn't be going back and making changes to national rankings or records."

Ah, but that is where a Paterno's Box of possibilities has opened up.

• Congratulations to Texas Tech's Kliff Kingsbury, who went over 5,000 passing yards in 2002 because his 375 yards in the Tangerine Bowl counted. But his three previous bowl totals of 616 yards do not.

• USC's Charles White will remain 197 yards shy of 2,000 in 1979 although had his Rose Bowl numbers from that year (247 yards) counted, he would be the 10th player in history to surpass two grand in a season. It's confusing enough that USC always has counted bowl numbers and gives White credit for 2,050 yards that season.

• Texas' single-game passing mark remains 408 yards by Major Applewhite, although in the 2001 Holiday Bowl, he threw



for 473 yards. That number remains in some kind of stat purgatory because the NCAA will not retroactively count it.

• Speaking of the Holiday Bowl, how about giving Barry Sanders credit for the 222 rushing yards he had against Wyoming in the 1988 game in San Diego ... which would extend his current NCAA single-season record to 2,850 yards. As it is, when someone breaks the mark with 13, 14 or even 15 games, they'll become No. 1 when they pass his mark at 2,628.

Thing is, the numbers would be a snap to update. There are hundreds of student-assistants in sports information offices at schools all over the country who would love to research the postseason histories for their schools. Besides, most of them already have the numbers handy.

Most of the NCAA's individual records have been set in the past 25 years. And it would be easy enough to update individual season records (by adding bowl games), since there were only eight bowl games a year until 1968.

Wright has heard the whining from SIDs and media who wondered why the significant and confusing change after all these years. His answer starts with the fact that football had been the only NCAA sport that doesn't count postseason stats.

"We have heard from a lot of people asking, why is football different than everything else," Wright said. "We didn't have a good answer. Frankly, the non-veterans of the staff always thought it was kind of crazy anyway."

That's where the controversy started. Wright submitted a survey to the SIDs of all four NCAA divisions last year and got back support for the move. But the mandate in Division I-A was only 42-37.

The division quickly fractioned. For years, the Big Ten has counted bowl numbers. It was fine with them. But even now Wisconsin counts Dayne's career rushing total as 7,125 yards (including bowl games). The official NCAA record, though, is Dayne with 6,397 yards — sans bowl games. Colorado's Dave Plati — a vocal opponent to the change — has since refused to count postseason stats in his media guide. For Plati, statistics are a sacred trust. His ability to mine factoids out of numbers is legendary among sportswriters.

He has, in fact, created new statistics in his football releases, which are simply the most informative in the country.

Let's just say it would be up to him to tell people that the numbers of Colorado great running back Byron "Whizzer" White — yes, the late Supreme Court Justice — don't stack up as well now as they did before he died last year.

"We're the ones that have to talk to our athletes of our past and say, something like ... 'Your numbers don't match up because they didn't count postseason until 2002,'" Plati said. "I have to tell our current leaders, 'You're no longer our all-time leading whatever, although you would be if we counted all your bowl numbers.'"

"We've got to protect the past. Enough records already disappear simply because those guys played with 10 games or 11 games and now 12 is becoming the thing."

The lower divisions favored the move because of the massive amount of numbers that never have been counted. Since 1990, for example, I-AA power Montana has played 25 playoff games. That's two extra seasons.

"Some of those years you play two or three extra games," Corbet said.

"I don't have a problem including postseason games; I just think you need to go back and make an honest effort and dig up all past history of that.

"Starting it now, to me, you'll always have asterisks. They're always going to be a little skewed."

Why should we care? Because of guys like Jim Van Valkenberg — the late, great NCAA director of statistics who knew more about numbers than Copernicus.

When Wright started at the NCAA years ago, he was always hit with the mantra of Van Valkenberg and other veterans that "football is different" when it came to stats.

Plati agrees. In every other sport there is usually a seamless transition into the postseason. Basketball has always counted the NCAA Tournament, which means the two teams in the championship game play six extra games.

Not so in I-A football.

"Teams change what they do for a bowl game," Plati said. "We've changed our offense four times in my career here. Stats aren't always reflective of what happens during the season. In some cases, you have seven weeks between the last game and the bowl game."

Still, the primary argument isn't so much that bowls shouldn't count ... but that if they do, then the records should be updated with bowl stats from the past.

If Van Valkenberg were alive, Wright admits, "He would probably throw a pencil at me." ■

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Clarett is one of a kind in more ways than one

Numbers are the only avenue by which to dispute that there's ever been an Ohio State tailback like Maurice Clarett.

Wait, forget Ohio State.

There's never been a tailback like Maurice Clarett, period.

Yes, yes, we know about Griffin and Harmon and Grange and their contemporaries throughout college football history, but we're not talking yards gained or touchdowns scored in putting Clarett in a class of one.

Purely in terms of smack-talk and chip-on-the-shoulder 'tude, there's never been another who comes close to Ohio State's sophomore who grew up (or not) before our very eyes last season and is *Lindy's* pick for 2003 national offensive Player of the Year.

How many guys do you know who, in the course of rushing for 1,237 rushing yards and 16 touchdowns as a true freshman, make more headlines woofin' than runnin'?

Clarett did last season, and might again this year, considering he flatly states: "I don't regret anything I've ever said."

Really?

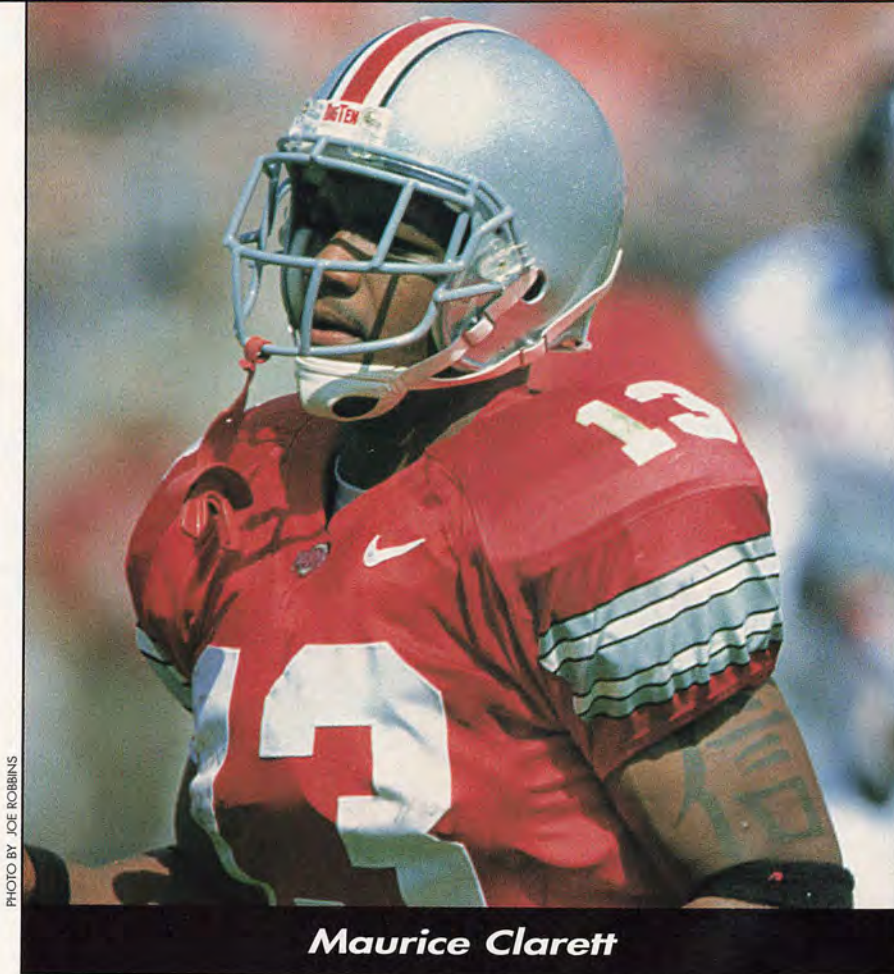
Not anything?

How about, "I have no affection for Ohio State."

Clarett dropped that bomb on Buckeye Nation at the Fiesta Bowl, where he got into a snit with OSU administration over its failure to pay his way home for the funeral of a friend who was murdered.

"The Diva," as Clarett has been dubbed by reporters, started by saying he had been "jerked around" by athletic director Andy Geiger's crew, and that "football is more important than a person's life to them."

When Geiger tried to diffuse the controversy and gingerly suggest the fault was Clarett's for failing to complete the proper paperwork, No. 13



Maurice Clarett

leveled the Buckeye brass with this gem: "The papers are on file. I won't sit here and let them lie about that. ... Of course, they're going to try to make themselves look better than me. They make me look like I'm stupid."

His Fiesta flare-up was the latest in a season-long soap opera that included:

- Accusing some OSU veterans of resenting his January enrollment to participate in spring practice: "You know how it is," Clarett said. "Certain people don't like certain people."

- Ripping the work ethic of the Buckeyes just prior to their season-opener against Texas Tech: "That's not how championship teams practice," Clarett said. "It would be a sad story if everybody gets embarrassed."

- Fumbling three times at North-

western and then shouting at running backs coach Tim Spencer when Spencer admonished him.

- Gracing the cover of *ESPN The Magazine* with a sneering photograph and one inside that pictured him disdainfully throwing his OSU jersey aside. In the article, Clarett spoke of leaving school after his freshman year to enter the NFL Draft.

Yet, you should know, Clarett showed those skeptical veterans how tough he was that spring by not missing one minute of drills, even though he underwent thumb surgery that doctors said could have sidelined him the entire time.

And after delivering that message, Clarett further showed his work ethic was above reproach with a 175-yard,

three-touchdown debut against Texas Tech in the first start by an OSU freshman tailback since 1943.

The tirade at Northwestern was only a prelude to Clarett's fifth 100-yard game the following week, with the sixth coming on the heels of that *ESPN The Magazine* flap to carry the Buckeyesto a win at Wisconsin.

So, while the kid may be brash and immature and prone to speaking with all the gentility of fingernails on a blackboard, he is also rawhide tough and bad enough to back up his brass.

Do not forget, also, that Clarett threw down 230 yards and two scores on eventual Pac-10 champion Washington State, even though he'd sustained a knee injury early in that game.

And do not forget, either, that Clarett shook off a painful shoulder stinger that sidelined him from two games and parts of two others to hammer Michigan with 119 rushing yards, one TD and the 26-yard catch-and-run that set up the winning score.

Then, after all his Fiesta theatrics,

Clarett scored two touchdowns, including the game-winner in double overtime of the Buckeyes' 31-24 upset of defending national champion Miami.

Looking back on that dizzying experience, Clarett admits there are things he might do differently now.

"I know I need to learn how to treat people a whole lot nicer," Clarett said. "Last year, I was 18 years old. I was kind of thrown into the fire. I wasn't used to everything. I wasn't used to everybody being as crazy about football."

Clarett kissed and made up with OSU fans by staging his own personal autograph session at a local mall on the heels of OSU's victory in Tempe.

Some 3,000 fanatics showed up, some of whom were no doubt behind the "hate e-mails" Clarett said he received throughout the season.

Coach Jim Tressel expects those to abate this season, not because fans suddenly gain perspective, but because Clarett will come back a savvy sophomore.

"In the times I've had a chance to sit down with Maurice, I think he's been the first one to admit that a lot of things happened in a short time for such a young guy," Tressel said. "I don't think he would say, 'That's a cop-out for the errors I've made.' But I think he would say, 'I know I have to get better at everything I do, on and off the field.'"

A big part of that, of course, is staying healthy.

He had six 100-yard games in the team's first eight games, but only one in the final six as the shoulder injury flared and limited his effectiveness. He missed three games due to injury.

The Buckeyes averaged 38 points per game before Clarett's stinger, but only 20.6 after that.

"He has that type of spark," wide receiver Michael Jenkins said. "It's a rare commodity. He likes to compete and win. He has that special thing that only comes around once in a while."

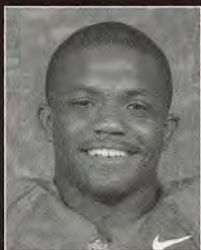
Which is just about right.

— Bruce Hooley

OFFENSE



Eli Manning



Maurice Claret



Darren Sproles



Reggie Williams



Rashaun Woods



Kellen Winslow

FIRST TEAM

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	School
QB	Eli Manning	6-5	218	Sr	Mississippi
RB	Maurice Claret	6-0	230	So.	Ohio State
RB	Darren Sproles	5-7	170	Jr.	Kansas State
WR	Reggie Williams	6-4	220	Jr.	Washington
WR	Rashaun Woods	6-2	190	Sr.	Oklahoma St.
TE	Kellen Winslow	6-5	232	Jr.	Miami
C	Nick Leckey	6-4	285	Sr.	Kansas State
OG	Justin Smiley	6-4	296	Jr.	Alabama
OG	David Baas	6-5	320	Sr.	Michigan
OT	Shawn Andrews	6-5	330	Jr.	Arkansas
OT	Robert Gallery	6-7	330	Jr.	Iowa
K	Nate Kaeding	6-0	195	Sr.	Iowa

SECOND TEAM

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	School
QB	Philip Rivers	6-5	236	Sr.	N.C. State
RB	Kevin Jones	6-0	212	Jr.	Virginia Tech
RB	Steven Jackson	6-2	224	Jr.	Oregon State
WR	Roy Williams	6-4	210	Sr.	Texas
WR	Mike Williams	6-5	210	So.	USC
TE	Ben Watson	6-3	253	Jr.	Georgia
C	A.J. Ricker	6-4	295	Sr.	Missouri
OG	Chris Myers	6-5	280	Jr.	Miami
OG	Stephen Peterman	6-4	325	Sr.	LSU
OT	Rob Petitti	6-6	330	Jr.	Pittsburgh
OT	Nat Dorsey	6-6	335	Jr.	Georgia Tech
K	Mike Nugent	5-10	170	Jr.	Ohio State



Nick Leckey



Justin Smiley



David Baas



Shawn Andrews



Robert Gallery



Nate Kaeding

All-America Team

Pollack Makes Believers As His Motor Runneth Over

David Pollack's declared major is middle school education. Perfect.

As one not quite ready to surrender to age, Georgia's affable defensive end will fit right in.

"He plays the game and practices and almost lives his life like a child," said Georgia defensive ends coach Jon Fabris. "He still has that youth and mischief that you can't help but put your head down and chuckle."

"I'm just a big kid," confessed Pollack. "I have fun. If you don't enjoy what we're doing, all the work we put into it, it's going to be a long year."

Actually, Pollack's youthful enthusiasm might be exactly why he enjoys a long career. It made for many long Saturdays for his opponents last season. Once an undersized defensive tackle, Pollack has become an overpowering pass rusher whose possibilities now seem unlimited.

Pollack recorded a school-record 14 sacks, intercepted a pass and recovered two fumbles as he was named SEC Player of the Year — a rarity for a defensive player.

It's not hard to understand why. He was the most dominant player on the SEC's most dominant team.

Without Pollack, the Bulldogs likely wouldn't have beaten South Carolina or Alabama. They almost certainly wouldn't have won their first SEC championship in 20 years.

"Whoever lined up against him was going to have a long day because he is relentless," Georgia coach Mark Richt said. "That's the best way to describe him."

Still, the award surprised Pollack as much as the interception that he found in his belly in the end zone against South Carolina.

"That's a pretty-boy honor," he said

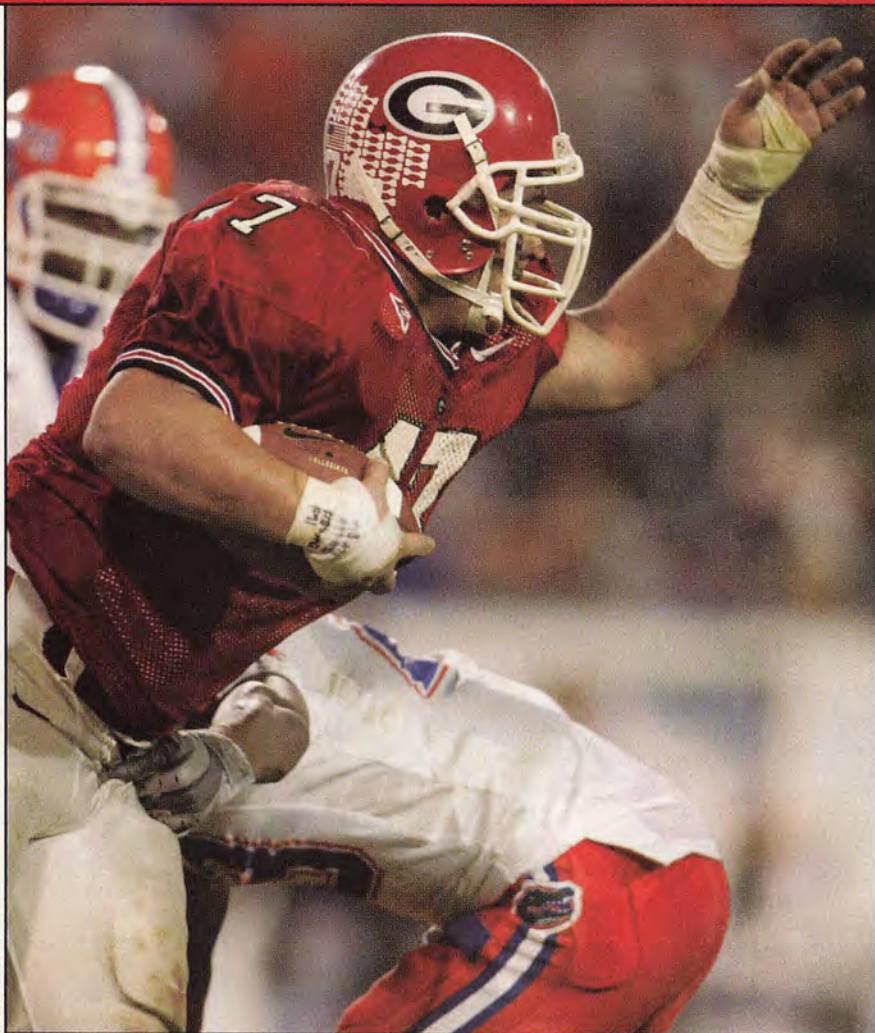


PHOTO BY ANDY LYONS

David Pollack

with a laugh, "and I'm not very pretty."

Pollack's first two weeks at defensive end in the spring of 2002 weren't very pretty. He had enjoyed a modestly productive season the previous fall as a true freshman defensive tackle. He played in all but two games and made four starts. He made the All-SEC Freshman team and *The Sporting News* fourth-team Freshman All-America team.

Pollack wanted to try another position — but not on defense. He wanted to get a look at fullback, having played there some in high school.

As a tackle, Pollack was a bit undersized at 265 pounds. Most of the Georgia coaches, including Richt, thought he wasn't quick enough to play end. But Fabris saw something they didn't.

"He's a slightly above-average athlete," Fabris said. "In fact, I wouldn't refer to David Pollack as an athlete. I'd refer to him as a football player. When David got moved to defensive end, he didn't look like a prototype defensive end. But I knew he had a motor."

After a few sessions of getting hammered in practice by Jon Stinch-

comb, George Foster and Kareem Marshall, Pollack went to Fabris and wondered when this doomed experiment would end. Some of the other coaches, including Richt, shared Pollack's concern.

"Those guys were just abusing me," Pollack said.

Fabris told him to keep working. The Bulldogs took two weeks off for spring break and when they returned Pollack had renewed resolve. When spring practice was over, Pollack had earned the team's Hustle Award and the respect of coaches and teammates.

"I got my beatings the first half of spring," he said. "Then I did some beating the second half of spring. I started fighting a lot more. Me and Stinch had a few good rounds."

The practice skirmishes with future NFL offensive linemen Stinchcomb and Foster served to prepare Pollack for life in the SEC.

"Game days — and this is not derogatory toward anybody — were

not as hard as practice," Pollack said.

Pollack had a way of making it look easier than it was. He made a stunning play against South Carolina in the SEC opener. He beat a double-team of an offensive tackle and a running back and swarmed quarterback Corey Jenkins in the South Carolina end zone. He reached up to block the pass, and instead, when he brought his arms down, found the football in his hands for a touchdown.

A first-team All-American, Pollack also finished as one of five finalists for the Bronko Nagurski Award as the outstanding defensive player in college football.

His 14 sacks ranked seventh nationally. He also had 35 quarterback pressures and 23 tackles for loss, blocked a punt and a field-goal attempt.

Pollack started drawing double-teams toward the end of last season, but it didn't seem to matter. He had 10 tackles against Auburn and a sack in

the Sugar Bowl victory over Florida State.

"He's a hard guy to double because he gets so low," Richt said. "When he gets doubled, he turns his body in such a way that he's very difficult to chip."

Pollack made a genius out of Fabris and a believer out of Richt. NFL scouts are starting to believe.

"He's not the prototype body for that position," said Richt. "But everybody who turns on the film and watches him doesn't seem to care. I think they're going to like him — two years from now."

Unfortunately for offensive tackles in Georgia's path, Pollack remains driven to improve. If anything, he expects to have an even bigger year because he knows more about his position.

"I should have had a lot more sacks last year," he said. "I'm still in college. I'm a kid. I've got a long way to go."

— Guerry Clegg

DEFENSE



David Pollack



Tommie Harris



Vince Wilfork



Brandon Kennedy



Teddy Lehman



Karlos Dansby

FIRST TEAM

Pos	Name	Yr.	Ht.	Wt.	School
DL	David Pollack	Jr.	6-2	275	Georgia
DL	Tommie Harris	Jr.	6-3	280	Oklahoma
DL	Vince Wilfork	Jr.	6-2	338	Miami
DL	Brandon Kennedy	Sr.	5-10	312	North Texas
LB	Teddy Lehman	Sr.	6-2	235	Oklahoma
LB	Karlos Dansby	Sr.	6-5	221	Auburn
LB	Rod Davis	Sr.	6-3	236	So. Miss.
DB	Chris Gamble	Jr.	6-2	180	Ohio State
DB	Marlin Jackson	Jr.	6-1	189	Michigan
DB	Derrick Strait	Sr.	5-11	194	Oklahoma
DB	Sean Taylor	Jr.	6-3	220	Miami
P	Matt Payne	Jr.	6-4	241	BYU

SECOND TEAM

Pos	Name	Yr.	Ht.	Wt.	School
DL	Will Smith	Sr.	6-4	250	Ohio State
DL	Jason Babin	Sr.	6-4	265	W. Michigan
DL	Kenechi Udeze	Jr.	6-3	280	USC
DL	Darrion Scott	Sr.	6-3	271	Ohio State
LB	Jonathan Vilma	Sr.	6-2	211	Miami
LB	D.J. Williams	Sr.	6-4	247	Miami
LB	Derrick Johnson	Sr.	6-4	220	Texas
DB	Nathan Vasher	Sr.	5-11	180	Texas
DB	Brandon Everage	Sr.	6-0	190	Oklahoma
DB	Bob Sanders	Sr.	5-8	200	Iowa
DB	Jim Leonhard	Jr.	5-8	180	Wisconsin
P	Dustin Colquitt	Jr.	6-2	196	Tennessee



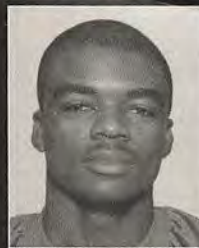
Rod Davis



Chris Gamble



Marlin Jackson



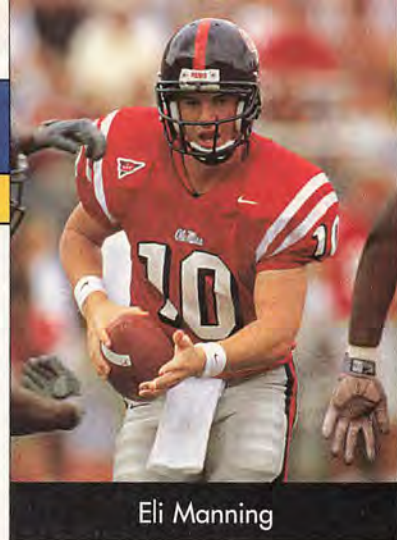
Derrick Strait



Sean Taylor



Matt Payne



Eli Manning

Manning's Final Fling is All About Winning

It wasn't about statistics.

Ole Miss' Eli Manning closed his junior season as the total yardage leader in the Southeastern Conference. It wasn't about padding his legend.

After all, Archie's son and Peyton's little brother is already widely considered an elite college quarterback after shattering most of dad's records at Ole Miss and chasing many of big brother's marks at Tennessee.

It certainly wasn't about the Heisman.

If the Mannings never had to answer another question about their pursuit of college football's most prestigious award, they'd be happier than a walk-on lineman returning a fumble for a touchdown.

So just why did Eli return for his senior season, instead of bolting for the NFL, which was waving millions before his eyes last spring?

"Eli dreams of being a pro quarterback, but he's never been fazed by a lot of those things," said Archie Manning, who finished fourth in the Heisman balloting in 1969 and third in 1970. "Not much affects him one way or another."

Except winning.

And it's the one thing 22-year-old Eli has yet to do on a consistent basis with the Rebels, who enter this season with their best shot of contending for an SEC title since Archie suited up some 30 years ago. Eli will be trying to match the one SEC championship Peyton managed, in 1997, when he finished second in the Heisman race to Michigan's Charles Woodson.

"I'm just trying to win games and become a better quarterback, but that's all about making Ole Miss a better team and

putting us in a better position to win games," said Eli, who owns 24 school records, but is just 14-10 as a starter.

"If becoming a better quarterback moves you up in the draft (next year), then so be it."

With the biggest decision of his college football career and another solid spring behind him, Manning has turned his focus toward improving the shortcomings in his game and assuming more of a leadership role as the Rebels retool for August camp.

The 6-foot-5 senior's top goal is to improve the win total of a team that has had three consecutive seven-win campaigns, including last year's 7-6 run that ended with an Independence Bowl upset of Nebraska.

Manning spent the offseason improving his mobility, strength and accuracy following a season in which he posted career highs in sacks (17) and interceptions (15), while he was hampered by more injuries (knee, elbow) than ever before.

Still, he passed for 3,401 yards and 21 touchdowns last season to boost his career totals to 6,519 yards and 52 scores.

With Manning back in the pocket, fifth-year coach David Cutcliffe is spared toiling through what would have been a rebuilding year despite the return of 16 other players with significant starting experience.

"Believe me when I say we're all looking forward to this season with great anticipation," said Cutcliffe, who was Peyton's offensive coordinator at Tennessee. "Eli is an outstanding player and has been a great leader throughout the offseason. He's improved every year and that will only continue this season. Even with how good he is, there's no question he puts his teammates first."

It'll take some doing to help his teammates get into first place. In the 11 seasons since the league expanded, the Rebels are the only SEC West team not to catch the train to the SEC championship game. In fact, when division and league titles are counted up, nine of the league's 11 other teams — only South Carolina (never) and Vandy (never, ever) — have had major reasons to celebrate since the Rebels' most recent championship (1963).

Manning now has at least 12 more games to lead the Rebels to their first title since four years before Archie played.

Archie Manning said he did not influence his son's decision to return, but told him any quarterback — especially one with an NFL future — would benefit from a senior season.

Eli Manning went through the same thinking process, and ultimately reached the same decision to return, as Peyton did six years ago at Tennessee.

"I want my kids to graduate," Archie said, referring to Eli, who received his marketing degree in May. "Both Peyton and Eli have been good students. I've never pushed them. Besides, Eli just doesn't jump at a lot of things."

Except the chance to quarterback Ole Miss to the SEC promised land.

— Michael Wallace

TOP QUARTERBACKS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Eli Manning	Sr.	Mississippi
2.	Philip Rivers	Sr.	N.C. State
3.	Matt Schaub	Sr.	Virginia
4.	Cody Pickett	Sr.	Washington
5.	David Greene	Jr.	Georgia
6.	Brad Smith	So.	Missouri
7.	Ben Roethlisberger	So.	Miami (Ohio)
8.	Craig Krenzel	Sr.	Ohio State
9.	Andrew Walter	Jr.	Arizona State
10.	John Navarre	Sr.	Michigan
11.	Casey Clausen	Sr.	Tennessee
12.	Ryan Schneider	Sr.	Central Florida
13.	Josh Fields	Jr.	Oklahoma State
14.	Eli Roberson	Sr.	Kansas State
15.	Rod Rutherford	Sr.	Pittsburgh
16.	Bryan Randall	Jr.	Virginia Tech
17.	Ryan Dinwiddie	Sr.	Boise State
18.	Bradlee Van Pelt	Sr.	Colorado State
19.	Timmy Chang	Jr.	Hawaii
20.	J.P. Losman	Sr.	Tulane
21.	Jon Beujter	Sr.	Illinois
22.	Luke McCown	Sr.	Louisiana Tech
23.	Jared Lorenzen	Sr.	Kentucky
24.	Scott McBrien	Sr.	Maryland
25.	Zack Mills	Jr.	Penn State

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PLAYER RATINGS

RUNNING BACKS

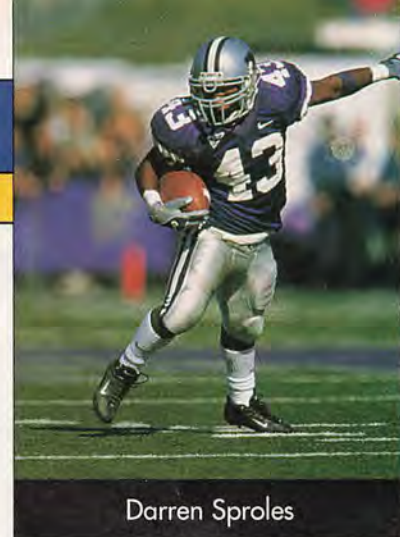


PHOTO BY JOE ROBBINS

Darren Sproles

You Didn't Hear it From Him, But is Sproles the Next Sanders?

Kansas State might be asking Darren Sproles to run the one thing he can't. His mouth.

"He's a real reserved kid and we want him to become more of a vocal leader," said Michael Smith, the Wildcats' running backs coach.

The dazzling stutter steps and full-circle moves Sproles uses to lose defenders come much more naturally to the 5-foot-9, 170-pound junior than any dialogue.

"That's not me, not to yell and stuff like that," Sproles said. "You can lead by doing the right things."

That much Sproles can do, even when his teammates have no clue what direction he's spinning.

"I love the guy," senior center Nick Leckey said. "He's quiet, doesn't talk much and yet he could. He could be the cockiest guy he wanted to be and we'd all accept it, because he's definitely proved his worth."

For sure. Sproles set a K-State record with 1,465 yards last season and finished with nine consecutive 100-yard games, another record. Now his name is mentioned among Heisman Trophy hopefuls.

Surprising? Not really, even though Sproles set records last year as a sophomore after carrying just 28 times as a freshman. He was, after all, one of the most heralded running backs to ever come out of Kansas, posting an 8.4-yard average while

rushing for 5,230 yards and 79 touchdowns at Olathe North High School.

Although he mostly watched in 2001 as Josh Scobey set the season rushing record Sproles would break, that Sproles' redshirt was shredded as a true freshman was telling. The only other tailback not to redshirt under head coach Bill Snyder was J.J. Smith, a 1,000-yard rusher in 1994.

"He shook somebody the very first time I'd seen him with the scout squad, and I said, 'Whoa,'" recalled senior linebacker Josh Buhl. "He's a very elusive guy. Nothing says it better, really, than 'he's the next Barry Sanders.'"

Whoa.

High praise, indeed, though increasingly common the more highlights and records Sproles posts.

Sanders, remember, is also from Kansas, though back then the college programs in the state were so inept he wasn't recruited heavily and opted for Oklahoma State, where he won the Heisman Trophy in 1988.

Sproles has heard the comparisons. He even stokes them a little by calling Sanders his idol, though Sproles says he did not pattern his style entirely by watching Sunday television.

"When I play, I don't know what I'm going to do," Sproles said. "My body just moves."

It just happens to move in ways that remind folks of Sanders.

"I understand the discussions," Snyder admitted. "I've probably thrown the name around myself, just in terms of understanding why people would make that comparison."

While Snyder doesn't want to be dragged into that discussion, it doesn't upset him as much as suggestions last year that Sproles wasn't durable enough. That came under scrutiny when, in his first game as a freshman against New Mexico State, Sproles suffered a shoulder injury.

After he missed three games with that injury, he came back to start every game last season, logging 237 carries as the Wildcats bounced back from a mediocre season to finish 11-2, including a win over Arizona State in the Holiday Bowl.

"All the little things that he does when he makes people miss him, those are all fine," said Snyder, "but I just like the way he puts his pads down and runs over those bigger guys. He's got great courage and toughness, and it's proven. He's a strong guy."

Stronger than before.

"Maybe he can't get a whole lot better than he is, but he is a better player now than he was when he finished last season," Snyder said. "Where's he better? It's a hard question to answer. But he just is seemingly better at everything he does."

Even his Speech assignments?

"One of our games late last season, I remember we were in the huddle and someone started popping off I didn't recognize," recalled quarterback Eli Roberson. "I looked over and it was Sproles. I looked at him and said, 'Who are you?'"

With another year like last year, soon everyone will know.

— Kevin Haskin

TOP RUNNING BACKS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Maurice Clarett	So.	Ohio State
2.	Darren Sproles	Jr.	Kansas State
3.	Kevin Jones	Jr.	Virginia Tech
4.	Steven Jackson	Jr.	Oregon State
5.	T.A. McLendon	So.	N.C. State
6.	Michael Turner	Sr.	Northern Illinois
7.	Bruce Perry	Sr.	Maryland
8.	Fred Russell	Sr.	Iowa
9.	Anthony Davis	Jr.	Wisconsin
10.	Cedric Benson	Jr.	Texas
11.	Derrick Knight	Sr.	Boston College
12.	Cedric Houston	Jr.	Tennessee
13.	Ronnie Brown	Jr.	Auburn
14.	Tatum Bell	Sr.	Oklahoma State
15.	Lonta Hobbs	So.	TCU
16.	Jason Wright	Sr.	Northwestern
17.	Walter Reyes	Jr.	Syracuse
18.	Ryan Grant	Jr.	Notre Dame
19.	Terry Caulley	So.	UConn
20.	Chris Perry	Jr.	Michigan
21.	Quincy Wilson	Sr.	West Virginia
22.	Mewelde Moore	Sr.	Tulane
23.	Rodney Davis	Sr.	Fresno State
24.	Tyler Ebell	So.	UCLA
25.	Shaud Williams	Sr.	Alabama

Not rated due to injury or suspension: Frank Gore, Miami; Carnell Williams, Auburn; Greg Jones, Florida State; Clarence Farmer, Arizona; Tony Hollings, Georgia Tech; Julius Jones, Notre Dame; Marion Barber III, Minnesota; ShanDerrick Charles, SMU; Chance Kretschmer, Nevada; Marty Johnson, Utah

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Every Interception = -1 point

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Rushing Yards Under 100 = 5 points
Every Sack = 1 point
Every Interception = 1 point

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☐ Arkansas	\$1,500,000	☐ Indiana	\$300,000	☐ North Carolina St.	\$1,385,000	☐ Texas A&M	\$1,030,000
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☐ Boston College	\$1,120,000	☐ Kentucky	\$385,000	☐ Notre Dame	\$1,400,000	☐ Tulane	\$305,000
☐ Bowling Green	\$530,000	☐ Louisville	\$850,000	☐ Ohio State	\$2,135,000	☐ UCLA	\$1,255,000
☐ Brigham Young	\$400,000	☐ LSU	\$1,415,000	☐ Oklahoma	\$2,200,000	☐ USC	\$1,840,000
☐ California	\$365,000	☐ Marshall	\$895,000	☐ Oklahoma State	\$790,000	☐ Utah	\$425,000
☐ Central Florida	\$485,000	☐ Maryland	\$1,745,000	☐ Oregon	\$1,430,000	☐ Vanderbilt	\$300,000
☐ Cincinnati	\$475,000	☐ Miami (Ohio)	\$775,000	☐ Oregon State	\$1,275,000	☐ Virginia	\$1,320,000
☐ Clemson	\$1,000,000	☐ Miami, FL	\$2,190,000	☐ Penn State	\$1,340,000	☐ Virginia Tech	\$1,670,000
☐ Colorado	\$1,515,000	☐ Michigan	\$1,860,000	☐ Pittsburgh	\$1,365,000	☐ Wake Forest	\$655,000
☐ Colorado State	\$1,180,000	☐ Michigan State	\$640,000	☐ Purdue	\$1,290,000	☐ Washington	\$1,525,000
☐ East Carolina	\$320,000	☐ Minnesota	\$990,000	☐ Rice	\$300,000	☐ Washington State	\$1,325,000
☐ Florida	\$1,790,000	☐ Mississippi	\$925,000	☐ South Carolina	\$815,000	☐ West Virginia	\$880,000
☐ Florida State	\$1,900,000	☐ Mississippi State	\$460,000	☐ South Florida	\$930,000	☐ Wisconsin	\$1,295,000

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PLAYER RATINGS

RECEIVERS



Reggie Williams

PHOTO BY ROBERT LEITER

How Good Is Williams? Well ... Just Ask Him

In what figured to be the last spring for a decade or two in which he won't be preparing for an NFL season, Reggie Williams decided to run track.

Williams hadn't run track his first year at the University of Washington, but gave it a go in the spring, teaming with three other Husky football players in the 4x100-meter relay.

Before the track season began, Williams was asked who would be the anchor.

"Me," he replied, nearly incredulous someone would have to ask.

That's Williams in a nutshell.

A wide receiver with an amazing combination of size (6-4, 220 pounds) and sprinter's speed, the only question Williams has left unanswered during his two-year UW football career is whether he might actually be better than he thinks.

Williams had barely arrived on campus two years ago when he stood up during a team dinner early in training camp and declared he was the best player in the room. "Or something like that," Williams says with a laugh.

Williams, who grew up in Lakewood, Wash., about 45

minutes from the Washington campus, says now he wasn't being entirely serious.

But upperclassmen, initially skeptical, spent a few days trying to put Williams in his place ... until they realized he might actually be as good as the hype. He remains the most highly touted player to sign with the Huskies during the Rick Neuheisel era.

In his first college game, Williams caught four passes for 134 yards — against Michigan, no less — and hasn't stopped. He set a Pac-10 freshman record with 55 catches in 2001 (since broken by USC's Mike Williams), then predicted he might get 100 catches and 1,500 yards as a sophomore.

He came close, shattering Washington's record book and leading the Pac-10 with 94 catches for 1,454 yards in 2002. That despite the fact Washington had the worst running game in its history last season, meaning Williams was often the team's only consistent offense.

Williams became even more productive late in the season once UW coaches — in an attempt to counteract constant double-teaming — began lining him up at slot and putting him in motion often. Williams responded with a phenomenal 35 catches for 461 yards in wins over Oregon State, Oregon and Washington State.

"He's talented in all the right ways," said USC coach Pete Carroll, rattling off Williams' height, speed and other natural attributes. "But more than anything physically, he's an excellent competitor. He thinks every time he gets the ball that he's going to score."

Still, Williams' brashness might have caught up to him when the Huskies went down to El Paso and were dominated by Purdue in the Sun Bowl, 34-24. According to Purdue players, Williams, apparently egged on by teammates, flexed his muscles in their direction after being introduced during a pre-game luncheon.

Feeling challenged, Purdue's secondary ganged up to hold Williams to six catches for 64 yards, none longer than 15. Though the film appeared to show Williams was open more than that, Washington offensive coordinator Keith Gilbertson said, "I think he learned some lessons in the Purdue game. It wasn't his best outing and they were excited about playing against him. I think all those things are good for a young guy."

Williams offers no apologies.

"I'm going to be me forever," Williams said. "That's just part of who I am. If you don't like it, I don't know what to tell you."

Lest you get the wrong impression, Williams is regarded as "a good kid." He says things like, "I still think it's funny that kids would want my autograph" and that he "loves" the attention he gets from fans for being a Husky football player.

"He competes and works hard and he's playing as hard on the last snap of the game as he is on the first snap," Gilbertson said. "That says a lot about him."

In that way, his play — and not his mouth — often does the best talking.

— Bob Condotta

TOP WIDE RECEIVERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Reggie Williams	Jr.	Washington
2.	Rashaun Woods	Sr.	Oklahoma State
3.	Roy Williams	Sr.	Texas
4.	Mike Williams	So.	USC
5.	Larry Fitzgerald	So.	Pittsburgh
6.	Braylon Edwards	Jr.	Michigan
7.	Darius Watts	Sr.	Marshall
8.	Fred Gibson	Jr.	Georgia
9.	Jerricho Cotchery	Sr.	N.C. State
10.	Michael Jenkins	Sr.	Ohio State
11.	Ernest Wilford	Sr.	Virginia Tech
12.	Michael Clayton	Jr.	LSU
13.	John Standeford	Sr.	Purdue
14.	Devard Darling	Jr.	Washington State
15.	Keary Colbert	Sr.	USC
16.	Chris Collins	Sr.	Ole Miss
17.	James Newson	Sr.	Oregon State
18.	Jonathan Orr	So.	Wisconsin
19.	Kevin Youngblood	Sr.	Clemson
20.	Jamaar Taylor	Sr.	Texas A&M

Not rated due to injury: Lee Evans, Wisconsin; Bernard Berrian, Fresno State

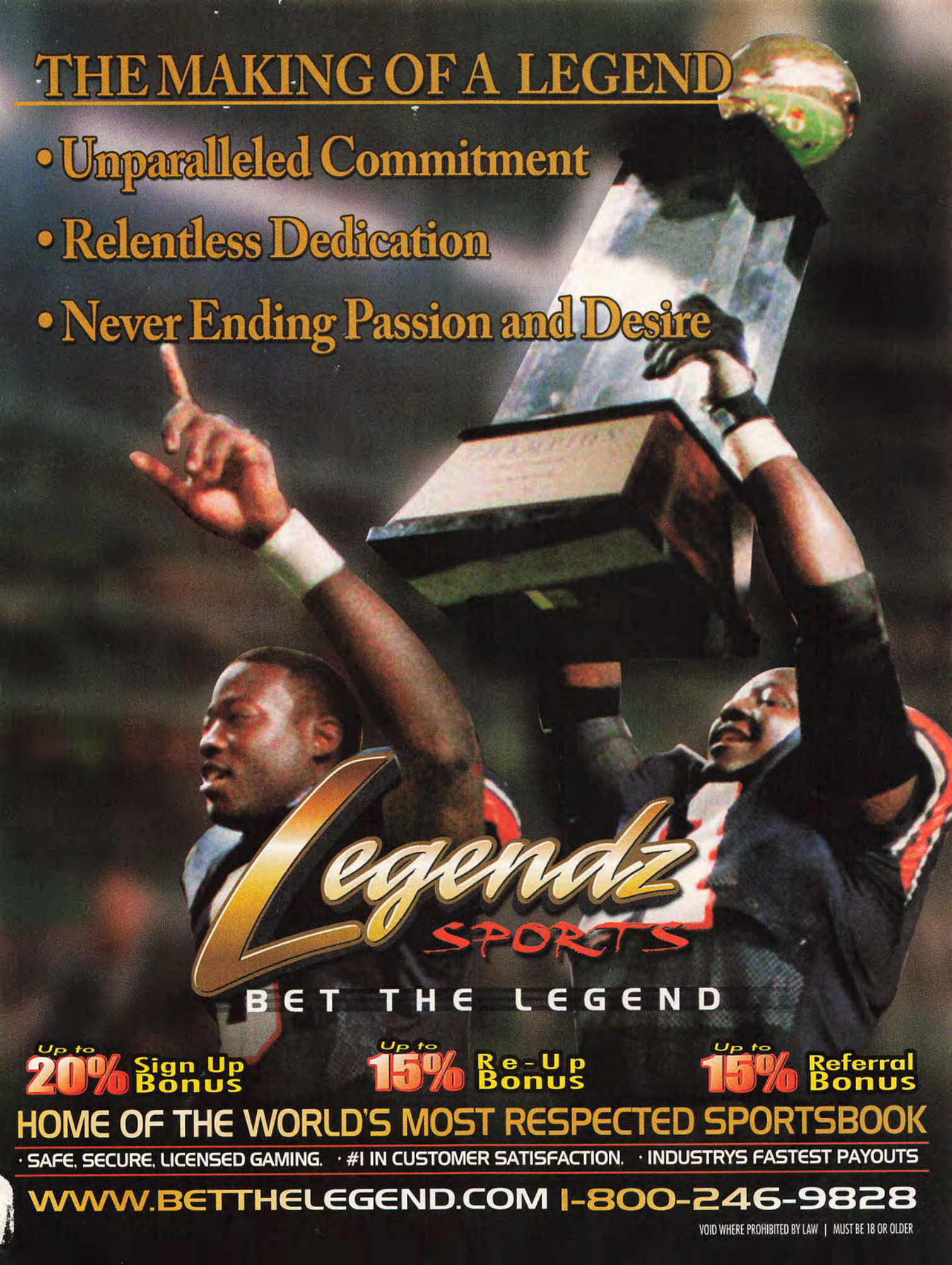
TOP TIGHT ENDS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Kellen Winslow	Jr.	Miami
2.	Benjamin Watson	Sr.	Georgia
3.	Ben Hartsock	Sr.	Ohio State
4.	Ben Utecht	Sr.	Minnesota
5.	Mickey Peters	Sr.	Texas Tech
6.	Heath Miller	So.	Virginia
7.	Kris Wilson	So.	Pittsburgh
8.	Joel Dreesen	Jr.	Colorado State
9.	Sean Ryan	Sr.	Boston College
10.	Bobby Blizzard	Sr.	North Carolina

Not rated due to injury: Brock Edwards, Texas; Ronnie Ghent, Louisville; Bo Scaife, Texas

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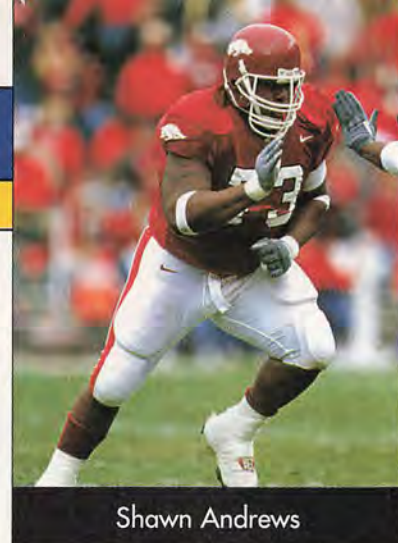
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Shawn Andrews

PHOTO BY JOHN WILLIAMSON

Plenty Big: Andrews Tries Not to Become Overgrown

Any discussion about how much better Shawn Andrews could be at destroying defenses starts and ends in one place: His weight.

A junior right tackle, Andrews earned consensus first-team All-America honors last season, and enters the 2003 season at Arkansas as potentially the No. 1 lineman in the nation on either side of the ball.

"He was the most dominating offensive lineman we saw last season," Georgia defensive coordinator Brian VanGorder said.

Andrews did most of his dominating at 350 pounds or more, anchoring a line that helped the Razorbacks lead the SEC in rushing, with 219 yards per game.

By the time Arkansas played Georgia in the SEC championship game, Andrews' weight had risen to 362. When his mom's holiday cooking kicked in after the Music City Bowl, he topped out somewhere above 370.

On a 6-5 frame, the extra pounds made Andrews a step slower, but that was still a step or two better than other SEC

blockers. He was the winner of the Jacobs Award as the conference's best blocker, an honor chosen by the coaches.

"When he gets out on that field he's H-E-L-L," Arkansas offensive line coach Mike Markuson said. "And he's knocking guys out of bounds and staying on them for 15 yards. But in the long run, I think he can get better if he ever gets a handle on his weight."

That's why Andrews plans to report to camp at 325 pounds. Arkansas coach Houston Nutt would settle for 335 and a commitment from Andrews to keep his weight in check.

NFL scouts already consider Andrews first-round draft material. Andrews hasn't said whether his junior season will be his last at Arkansas, but Nutt has reminded him that he has a better chance to play longer, make more money and live a healthier life if he learns how to control his weight now.

Reaching the NFL is a strong motivator for Andrews because it would enable him to take care of his mom, Linda, a single parent who worked countless graveyard shifts so she could support three boys in rural Camden, Ark.

That's why Andrews is trying to follow the advice of a nutritionist who recommended a cap of 3,000 calories a day to help him lose weight.

Turning down food isn't easy for Andrews. By his own admission, Andrews gained 10 pounds in the week leading up to the Cotton Bowl at the end of the 2001 season.

"It's nothing like the Nutty Professor or anything to that extent, but he has a pretty good appetite on him," receiver George Wilson said. "I know when he ate with us one time, he had a plate full of chicken and spaghetti and meatballs, and he just topped the whole plate off with honey."

Weekdays aren't nearly as tempting as weekends.

"Just being around my friends, they'll maybe order a pizza," Andrews said. "The pizza is getting delivered to them so I don't have a choice but to sit there and eat it. They put me through a lot of turmoil on the weekends."

Eating might be Andrews' only weakness. He works out hard, doesn't take plays off, devastates as a run blocker and stays in step with speedy pass rushers. He even sings well. If his smile isn't the team's biggest, it is the most constant.

Andrews started the third game of his true freshman season and has started 23 of 24 games since then. A severely sprained ankle forced him to miss one game as a sophomore, but he played through several other games with the injury.

"Everybody in the conference looks for offensive linemen like Shawn Andrews," Auburn coach Tommy Tuberville said.

His own coaches have been careful about how closely they look over Andrews' considerable shoulders, choosing to prod rather than bash. Too much haranguing about weight can be counterproductive, Markuson said.

Markuson has faith that Andrews will control his weight because "down the road, he knows and we know what he's capable of doing when he gets out of here."

— Scott Cain

TOP CENTERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Nick Leckey	Sr.	Kansas State
2.	A.J. Ricker	Sr.	Missouri
3.	Ben Wilkerson	Jr.	LSU
4.	Jake Grove	Sr.	Virginia Tech
5.	Dave Pearson	Jr.	Michigan
6.	Alex Stepanovich	Sr.	Ohio State
7.	Vince Carter	Jr.	Oklahoma
8.	Nick Romeo	Sr.	Syracuse
9.	Scott Wells	Sr.	Tennessee
10.	Brian Ottny	Sr.	Michigan State

TOP TACKLES

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Shawn Andrews	Jr.	Arkansas
2.	Robert Gallery	Sr.	Iowa
3.	Rob Petitti	Jr.	Pittsburgh
4.	Nat Dorsey	Jr.	Georgia Tech
5.	Tony Pape	Jr.	Michigan
6.	Rob Droege	Sr.	Missouri
7.	Jammal Brown	Jr.	Oklahoma
8.	Carlos Joseph	Jr.	Miami
9.	Wesley Britt	Jr.	Alabama
10.	Richie Incognito	So.	Nebraska

TOP GUARDS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Justin Smiley	Jr.	Alabama
2.	David Baas	So.	Michigan
3.	Chris Myers	Jr.	Miami
4.	Stephen Peterman	Sr.	LSU
5.	Shannon Snell	Sr.	Florida
6.	Marwan Hage	Sr.	Colorado
7.	Vernon Carey	Sr.	Miami
8.	Lamar Bryant	Sr.	Maryland
9.	Eyoseph Efeoff	Jr.	UCLA
10.	Bob Montgomery	Sr.	Iowa State

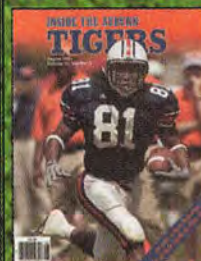
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AUBURN - Inside the Auburn Tigers	10 magazines, 12 newsletters	\$35	800-234-1716
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EAST CAROLINA - Pirates' Chest	20 issues	\$25	800-642-1183
FLORIDA - Gator Bait	32 issues, 2 yearbooks	\$49.95	800-782-3216
FLORIDA STATE - Osceola	34 issues	\$49.95	800-725-4321
GEORGIA - Georgia Bulldog Magazine	13 magazines, 17 newsletters	\$30	706-542-3944
INDIANA - Inside Indiana	26 issues, 2 yearbooks	\$47	800-282-4648
IOWA - Voice of the Hawkeyes	23 issues, 2 yearbooks	\$44.90	888-474-8669
IOWA STATE - CycloneNation	10 magazines	\$44.95	888-979-0979
KANSAS - Jayhawk Insider	17 issues, 2 yearbooks	\$44.95	800-467-6532
KANSAS STATE - Purple Pride	18 issues, 2 yearbooks	\$44.95	800-467-6532
KENTUCKY - The Cats' Pause	35 issues	\$49.95	800-641-3302
LSU - Tiger Rag	36 issues	\$52	888-328-4437
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TEXAS TECH - Red Raider Sports	15 issues, 2 yearbooks	\$34.90	800-467-6532
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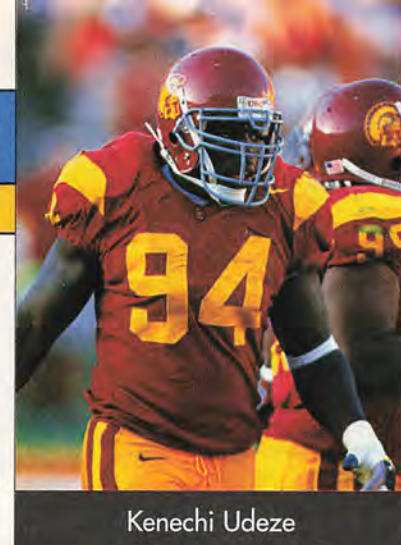
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PLAYER RATINGS

DEFENSIVE LINEMEN



Kenechi Udeze

PHOTO BY ROBERT LEITER

Udeze Rings a Few Bells, Even if Name Doesn't – Yet

USC defensive end Kenechi Udeze woke one morning, flipped on the TV and watched a profile of Alan Page, a Hall of Fame defensive lineman for the Minnesota Vikings and current Minnesota Supreme Court justice.

"He's an amazing person. I really want to meet him one day," Udeze said.

"It really influenced me. There's many things he's done outside of football. I'd like to be like him. He was undersized but still a great player."

Like Page, Udeze is much more than a football player. He's one of the more straight-laced Trojans who spends free time

studying and won't be seen partying on Fraternity Row.

"I try to stay away from the negativity,"

Udeze said. "It all goes back to my mom. To this day, I don't drink and smoke."

Udeze isn't entirely undersized. He's 6-3, 275 pounds with a size 18 shoe. He says he only finds properly fitted footwear by ordering off the Internet. He can barely remember what it is like to walk into a Foot Locker and find something he liked.

"That went out in middle school when I was a size 16," said Udeze, a junior. "My feet help me, though. It takes someone big and mighty and powerful to knock me over."

He was recruited to play defensive tackle. But his power and quickness make him extremely difficult to contain on the outside.

USC defensive line coach Ed Orgeron previously coached defensive tackles like Warren Sapp, Russell Maryland and Cortez Kennedy for the Miami Hurricanes. But Udeze is different.

"He's bigger than the ends we had at Miami," Orgeron said. "He's more of a powerful player. He's good on the run. This year, he needs to become a dominant pass rusher."

Udeze admits this year's No. 1 goal is to increase the heat of USC's pass rush.

"On run-stopping, I'm pretty good," he said. "But on pass rush, I'm too timid."

That probably won't be an issue this year, and it's not like he wasn't a force last season. Udeze recorded 44 tackles, including 7.5 sacks, and forced a bone-jarring USC-record six fumbles. He even intercepted a pass.

"This is his year to show he's one of the better ends around," coach Pete Carroll said. "He's really cashed in on the mentality of getting better and becoming a complete player."

It's never been tough to get Udeze to adapt at USC. In becoming a complete player, he's increased his quickness by becoming lean. He's lost 82 pounds since his senior year at Verbum Dei High in Los Angeles, when he was a whopping 357 pounds.

His physique changed so dramatically that his nickname, BKU (Big Kenechi Udeze), almost seemed inappropriate.

"I run into guys that I've met from high school all-star games who can't believe I lost the weight," Udeze said. "But I've dieted for so long, my body is used to not eating. I'm used to not eating a lot of food. I can't afford to eat a lot. Whenever I think about food, I gain weight."

Udeze is one of the last players to graduate from Verbum Dei, which dropped football after he graduated.

"I'm trying to represent my high school," Udeze said. "There were 185 students in my school and 29 in my class. My coach was like a father to me. It's where I learned to be level-headed, and they always stressed academics, which have been important to me."

That's the idea: Bringing the brains as well as the brawn ... taking a page from Page.

— Scott Wolf

TOP DEFENSIVE TACKLES

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Tommie Harris	Jr.	Oklahoma
2.	Vince Wilfork	Jr.	Miami
3.	Brandon Kennedy	Sr.	North Texas
4.	Darrion Scott	Sr.	Ohio State
5.	Jordan Carstens	Sr.	Iowa State
6.	Marcus Tubbs	Sr.	Texas
7.	Randy Starks	Jr.	Maryland
8.	Chad Lavalais	Jr.	LSU
9.	Mike Patterson	Jr.	USC
10.	Darnell Dockett	Sr.	Florida State
11.	Grant Bowman	Sr.	Michigan
12.	Jesse Mitchell	Sr.	Ole Miss
13.	DeMarco McNeil	Sr.	Auburn
14.	Kory Klein	Sr.	Oklahoma
15.	Haloti Ngata	So.	Oregon
16.	Rodrique Wright	So.	Texas
17.	Rodney Leisle	Sr.	UCLA
18.	Chad Pugh	Jr.	TCU
19.	Darrell Campbell	Sr.	Notre Dame
20.	Tim Anderson	Sr.	Ohio State

Not rated due to injury: Shaun Cody, USC

TOP DEFENSIVE ENDS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	David Pollack	Jr.	Georgia
2.	Will Smith	Sr.	Ohio State
3.	Jason Babin	Sr.	Western Michigan
4.	Kenechi Udeze	Jr.	USC
5.	Claude Harriott	Sr.	Pittsburgh
6.	Nathaniel Adibi	Sr.	Virginia Tech
7.	Howard Hodges	Sr.	Iowa
8.	Antwan Odom	Jr.	Alabama
9.	Jason Kaufusi	Sr.	Utah
10.	Andrew Shull	Sr.	Kansas State
11.	Bo Schobel	Sr.	TCU
12.	Dave Ball	Sr.	UCLA
13.	Colt Colas	Sr.	Virginia Tech
14.	Jonathan Jackson	Jr.	Oklahoma
15.	Derrick Strong	Sr.	Illinois
16.	Louis Gachelon	Sr.	Syracuse
17.	Kevin Emanuel	Sr.	Florida State
18.	Matt Roth	Jr.	Iowa
19.	Isaac Brown	Sr.	Washington State
20.	Reggie Torbor	Sr.	Auburn

Not rated due to injury: Greg Gathers, Georgia Tech; Constantin Ritzmann, Tennessee

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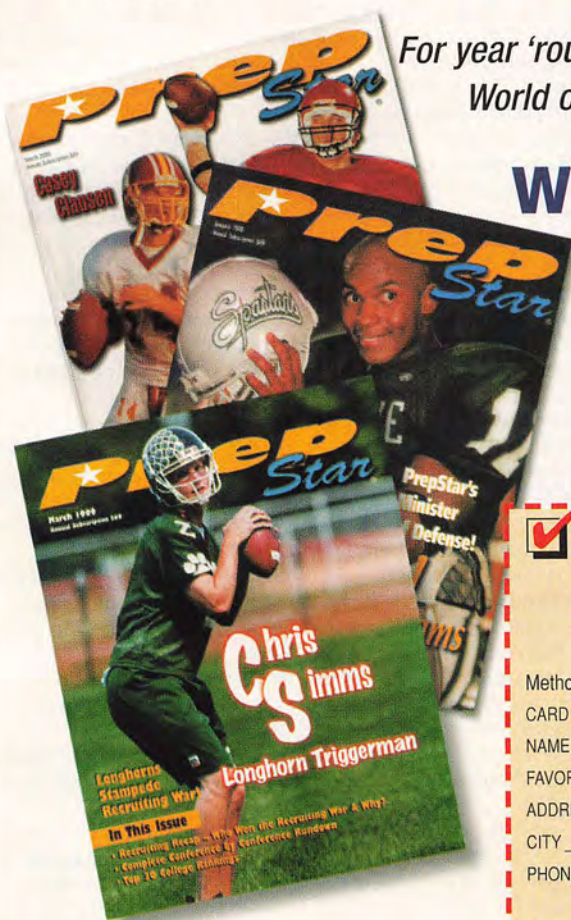
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PLAYER RATINGS

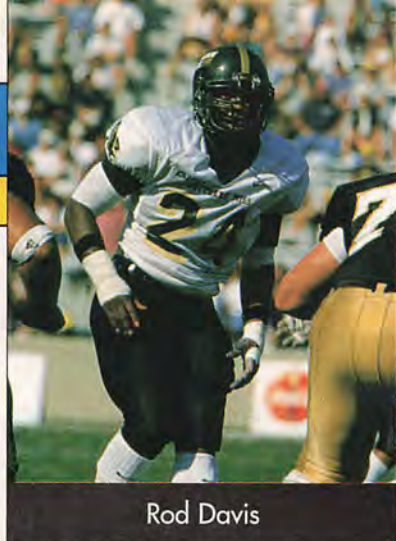
LINEBACKERS

Davis Using NFL's Rebuff as Motivation

Since first setting foot on a football field as a second-grader, Rod Davis had been like the kid on the merry-go-round whose grasp always exceeds his reach, the coveted brass ring of respect eluding his possession.

At Gulfport High School there were others who drew the attention, nudging Davis to the lip of the spotlight.

As a redshirt freshman at Southern Miss, Davis' struggles in the season opener cost him his starting job for two games. As his game-day reputation grew, some wondered if his dedication and discipline during the week and offseason matched the inherent responsibilities that come with being the man in the middle of the Golden Eagles defense.



Rod Davis

Finally, after turning in a dominant season in 2002, Davis considered becoming the first Southern Miss player to leave early for the National Football League. The NFL made that decision for him, informing him he likely would not be drafted in the first two rounds as he'd believed.

So, Davis is back, hopping in line for one more go-round at a prize, seeking a ring of respect for himself and a Conference USA championship for his teammates.

"I've always believed that God puts the right things in front of you, whether to help you along or for you to overcome," Davis said. "I just use it all as motivation."

And a motivated Davis can be an overwhelming force.

At 6-2, 240 pounds, he is a bone-jarring tackler, but it is his speed (sub-4.6 seconds in the 40), cat-like quickness and perpetual inner motor that set him apart.

Last year, Davis finished with 168 tackles, including 23.5 tackles for loss and 10.5 sacks. He averaged 12.9 tackles per game, including 19 stops against South Florida.

Davis had 10 or more unassisted tackles in six games last season, and 10 or more tackles in 12 of 13 games. He ranked third nationally in solo stops (122), sixth in total tackles and 13th in tackles for loss.

Those numbers not only earned him repeat all-conference first-team honors, Davis became the first defensive player and the first Golden Eagle to be awarded the Conerly Trophy. The Conerly — named after former Ole Miss All-American and New York Giants All-Pro quarterback Charlie Conerly — is given annually to Mississippi's top college football player.

"He's awesome," said defensive coordinator Tyrone Nix, a former USM middle linebacker who now coaches that position. "The thing about Rod, anything that you might say has humbled him, he uses that as motivation to become a better player."

Some of those motivating moments came early. A high school safety, Davis was moved to middle linebacker at USM, and a year later, replaced T.J. Slaughter, who had been drafted by the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Then came the 2000 season opener at Tennessee in front of more than 100,000 orange-clad zanies.

"I'd had a real good spring and great two-a-days, and then it was like being a deer in the headlights," Davis said. "That game right there made me humble. I can remember that game more than any other game I've played in my life."

Davis was pulled as the starter, but did well enough in a reserve role that he regained his starting position in that season's fourth game. He's been there ever since.

"I want to get Southern Miss back to the top," Davis said. "The last championships were in 1997 and 1999. That's hard to swallow."

"And I didn't feel very comfortable or very good about what the NFL had to tell me. All my life, I've felt a little like an unknown role player. Well, it's time for me to step up and dominate."

— Tim Doherty

TOP INSIDE LINEBACKERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Rod Davis	Sr.	Southern Miss
2.	Jonathan Vilma	Sr.	Miami
3.	Lance Mitchell	Sr.	Oklahoma
4.	Courtney Watson	Sr.	Notre Dame
5.	Dontarrious Thomas	Sr.	Auburn
6.	Richard Seigler	Sr.	Oregon State
7.	Niko Koutouvides	Sr.	Purdue
8.	Barrett Ruud	Jr.	Nebraska
9.	Mikal Baaqee	Jr.	Virginia Tech
10.	Leon Joe	Jr.	Maryland
11.	Kevin Mitchell	Sr.	Oregon
12.	Mike Goolsby	Jr.	Notre Dame
13.	Caleb Miller	Sr.	Arkansas
14.	T.J. Mawhinney	Sr.	Mississippi State
15.	Sean Tufts	Sr.	Colorado
16.	Carl Diggs	Sr.	Michigan
17.	Ryan Fowler	Sr.	Duke
18.	Ben West	Sr.	Minnesota
19.	Freddie Roach	So.	Alabama
20.	Jeff Mack	Sr.	Wisconsin

Not rated due to injury: Pat Durr, Northwestern

TOP OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Teddy Lehman	Sr.	Oklahoma
2.	Karlos Dansby	Sr.	Auburn
3.	D.J. Williams	Sr.	Miami
4.	Derrick Johnson	Jr.	Texas
5.	Michael Boulware	Sr.	Florida State
6.	Grant Wiley	Sr.	West Virginia
7.	Matt Grootegoed	Jr.	USC
8.	Josh Buhl	Sr.	Kansas State
9.	Brooks Daniels	Sr.	Alabama
10.	Tony Bua	Sr.	Arkansas
11.	Darryl Blackstock	So.	Virginia
12.	Kendyll Pope	Sr.	Florida State
13.	Grant Steen	Sr.	Iowa
14.	Josh Ott	Sr.	Boston College
15.	Michael Boley	Jr.	Southern Miss
16.	Gino Capone	Sr.	Penn State
17.	John Leake	Sr.	Clemson
18.	Cornelius Wortham	Sr.	Alabama
19.	Derrick Ballard	Sr.	Memphis
20.	Eric Pauly	Sr.	Colorado State

Not rated due to injury: Kevin Burnett, Tennessee

PLAYER RATINGS

DEFENSIVE BACKS

Throwback or Not, This Gamble is a Sure Thing

The workload Ohio State junior Chris Gamble shoulders as a wide receiver, cornerback and kick returner labels him a throwback to a bygone era.

Trouble is, Gamble's training secret wouldn't pass in the days of the Junction Boys, Dirty Thirty or Four Horsemen.

"How do I stay fresh out there?" Gamble says. "There really isn't much to it. I just drink a lot of water so I don't cramp up."

The Bear, Rockne or any other old-timer would sniff at that. Ohio State coach Jim Tressel isn't about to take issue with Gamble auditioning as an Aquafina pitchman.

"If Chris says he needs water," Tressel said, "we'll try to

make sure he never runs out."

Plenty of H₂O hardly seems sufficient explanation for how the 6-3 Gamble went from virtual unknown to invaluable 60-minute man last season in the Buckeyes' march to a 14-0 record and national title.

He never caught a touchdown pass on offense or scored on special teams, but Gamble was voted co-MVP of the Buckeyes along with quarterback Craig Krenzel.

That resulted from his work at cornerback, a position he didn't first start at until OSU's ninth game. By then, Gamble already had two end-zone interceptions in the two games he had toiled (however briefly) on defense.

The first turned away a Cincinnati scoring threat in a 23-19 Ohio State escape; the second denied Wisconsin from overtaking the Buckeyes late in a 19-14 final.

Those heroics convinced coaches to use Gamble more liberally on defense against high-powered Penn State.

The more Gamble practiced on defense that week, the clearer it became to defensive coordinator Mark Dantonio that the cure for OSU's weakness at field corner was the skinny kid with the dreadlocks from Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

"We wanted to teach him the position in increments," Dantonio said. "But he was an impact player right away. When someone can impact other players like he does, you don't play him part time."

"I remember asking Chris that whole game if he needed any help with the coverages or what we were doing," boundary corner Dustin Fox said. "He just kept saying, 'No, I'm good.'"

Good didn't begin to say it. Gamble started the rest of the season at wide receiver and cornerback, playing his defensive position well enough to receive consensus first-team All-Big Ten recognition.

As improbable as that seemed, Gamble one-upped his regular-season achievements in OSU's 31-24 double-overtime Fiesta Bowl upset of Miami.

He participated in 120 of the game's 178 plays, including all 77 on defense, an additional 32 on offense and 11 on special teams.

His blanket coverage limited Miami All-American Andre Johnson to four catches for 54 yards. His offensive contributions were highlighted by a 57-yard reception.

Perhaps most important were his instincts in selling a pass-interference penalty on the critical fourth down in the second overtime. That came during the chaos of the Hurricanes celebrating an apparent victory and fireworks exploding over Sun Devil Stadium — and the flag kept the game alive.

Gamble himself doesn't know where he'd prefer to play or which position he'd pick if he had to.

"I want to play both," he said. "I don't see why I can't do it this year. I mean, I did it last year, so this year, I'll train for it and be ready."

Stand by with the water.

— Bruce Hooley



Chris Gamble

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

TOP CORNERBACKS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Chris Gamble	Jr.	Ohio State
2.	Marlin Jackson	Jr.	Michigan
3.	Derrick Strait	Sr.	Oklahoma
4.	Nathan Vasher	Sr.	Texas
5.	Antrel Rolle	Jr.	Miami
6.	Corey Webster	Sr.	LSU
7.	Vontez Duff	Sr.	Notre Dame
8.	Lawrence Richardson	Sr.	Arkansas
9.	DeAngelo Hall	Jr.	Virginia Tech
10.	Keiwan Ratliff	Sr.	Florida
11.	Kelly Jennings	So.	Miami
12.	Ahmad Carroll	Jr.	Arkansas
13.	Domonique Foxworth	Jr.	Maryland
14.	Justin Miller	So.	Clemson
15.	Jason David	Sr.	Washington State
16.	Antonio Perkins	Jr.	Oklahoma
17.	Derrick Johnson	Jr.	Washington
18.	R.J. Oliver	Jr.	Arizona State
19.	Dunta Robinson	Sr.	South Carolina
20.	Jabari Greer	Sr.	Tennessee

TOP SAFETIES

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Sean Taylor	Jr.	Miami
2.	Brandon Everage	Sr.	Oklahoma
3.	Bob Sanders	Sr.	Iowa
4.	Jim Leonhard	Jr.	Wisconsin
5.	Stuart Schweigert	Sr.	Purdue
6.	Rashad Baker	Sr.	Tennessee
7.	Etric Pruitt	Sr.	Southern Miss
8.	Madieu Williams	Sr.	Maryland
9.	Maurice Sikes	Sr.	Miami
10.	Dexter Reid	Jr.	North Carolina
11.	Jamaal Brimmer	Jr.	UNLV
12.	Guss Scott	Sr.	Florida
13.	Keith Lewis	Sr.	Oregon
14.	Jason Shivers	Jr.	Arizona State
15.	Medford Moorer	Sr.	Colorado
16.	Kentrell Curry	Sr.	Georgia
17.	Jamaine Billups	Sr.	Iowa State
18.	Ryan Aycock	Sr.	Texas Tech
19.	Glenn Earl	Sr.	Notre Dame
20.	Gibril Wilson	Sr.	Tennessee

PLAYER RATINGS

ALL-PURPOSE

In the Big 12, Don't Mess with 'Wild, Wild Wes'

Wes Welker played in arguably the most talented backfield in the country in the late 1990s at Oklahoma City's Heritage Hall High School — one bent on both breaking and selling records. Such is the case when you're a multi-dimensional tailback and your quarterback is the future lead singer of the Graham Colton Band, which has opened for the Counting Crows on national tours.

"Graham and I have been good friends ever since we were in pre-school," says Welker, a leading man of his own at Texas Tech. "He'd always be playing the guitar and singing in our spare time, while I did my own thing."

Welker's "own thing" has led to big things in Lubbock. Last year as a junior, Welker caught 86 passes for 1,054 yards, becoming only the second player in school history to break the 1,000-yard receiving mark.

Welker also set an NCAA single-season record with 57 punt returns in 2002, and had a school-record 752 return yards. He's returned six punts for touchdowns in his career,

two shy of the Big 12 Conference record. So, he's certainly aware of the abolishment of the two-yard "halo" rule in the offseason.

The halo offered the return man an advantage, because he could avoid calling for a fair catch minus the risk (usually) of getting blasted by a defender. Last season, the average punt return was 10.59 yards, the most in nearly 50 years. Now, the NCAA will revert to the old rule that officials claim will be better enforced, as a return man must be allowed an "unimpeded" opportunity to catch the punt.

"I don't think the change will affect the way I return punts or anything like that," Welker said.

"But it was nice to have that reassurance that you weren't going to take one in the mouth. The (national) return average probably will go back down, and people nearly getting their heads knocked off will probably go up a little bit, as well."

The latter seemed a valid concern for an adolescent Wes, who can now credit his older brother, Lee, for toughening him up back home in Oklahoma.

"During the summer both of my parents worked, and so Lee and I would be at home and most of his friends would come over to the house," Welker said.

"So I was hanging out with an older crew, and a lot of the time they chose to pick on me — throw me to the ground and what not. I called 9-1-1 a few times on 'em. That'd scare my brother and his friends good, and so I'd hang up the phone. The cops would always call back to make sure everything was all right, though. Let me tell you, that was a lifesaver."

Former Texas A&M coach R.C. Slocum probably wished he could have called 9-1-1 for help in a 48-47 home loss to Tech last year. That's when Welker amassed a career-high 327 all-purpose yards, and returned a punt 88 yards for a touchdown (the longest ever against A&M) in the final quarter.

After the game Slocum said the Aggies considered kicking away from Welker late, but didn't. Maybe because Welker, at 5-foot-9 and 185 pounds, better resembles the beverage-slurping dude in the 10th row of a Graham Colton concert than a breathtaking return man.

First impressions of that frame kept the Oklahoma Player of the Year as a high school senior from getting scholarship offers until Texas Tech extended one a week after signing day. Everyone other than Red Raiders coach Mike Leach thought he was too short, too slow.

"He does a lot of things that he has no business doing," former Tech quarterback Kliff Kingsbury said of Welker. "He should be hanging out in a fraternity somewhere."

"Good one," responded Welker, smiling a bit at the irony of the gangly Kingsbury's remarks. "I'm sure somebody probably used that line on him and he just tucked it away for recycling. I guess I was his victim."

The good-natured Welker laughs, as it's glaringly apparent that "Wild, Wild Wes" — so dubbed in high school — is no one's victim.

— Brent Zwerneman



PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

TOP KICKERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Nate Kaeding	Sr.	Iowa
2.	Mike Nugent	Jr.	Ohio State
3.	Billy Bennett	Sr.	Georgia
4.	Nick Browne	Jr.	TCU
5.	Nick Novak	Jr.	Maryland
6.	Jared Siegel	Jr.	Oregon
7.	Nick Hayes	So.	UAB
8.	Josh Scobee	Sr.	Louisiana Tech
9.	Sandro Sciortino	Sr.	Boston College
10.	Steve Azar	Sr.	Northern Illinois

TOP PUNTERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Matt Payne	Jr.	BYU
2.	Dustin Colquitt	Jr.	Tennessee
3.	Kyle Larson	Sr.	Nebraska
4.	Donnie Jones	Sr.	LSU
5.	Cody Scates	Sr.	Texas A&M
6.	Andy Lee	Sr.	Pittsburgh
7.	Adam Finley	Jr.	Michigan
8.	Vinnie Burns	Jr.	Virginia Tech
9.	Tim Parker	Sr.	Arizona State
10.	Robert Billings	Sr.	Middle Tennessee

TOP ALL-PURPOSE

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	Derek Abney	Sr.	Kentucky
2.	Wes Welker	Sr.	Texas Tech
3.	Chris Gamble	Jr.	Ohio State
4.	Keiwan Ratliff	Sr.	Florida
5.	Dexter Wynn	Sr.	Colorado State
6.	Craig Bragg	Jr.	UCLA
7.	DeAngelo Hall	Jr.	Virginia Tech
8.	Roscoe Parrish	So.	Miami
9.	Vontez Duff	Sr.	Notre Dame
10.	Steve Suter	Jr.	Maryland

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UNIT RANKINGS

OFFENSE

TOP 10 BACKFIELDS

1. Kansas State Other teams have better depth in their backfield, with multiple excellent options at quarterback and running back, but no team has two 1,000-yard rushers like Kansas State.

With QB Eli Roberson running and gunning (with ever-improving accuracy), he's doing a fine imitation of Michael Bishop, with hopes of getting one step further than Bishop and get K-State that Big 12 title. Roberson, a senior, rushed for 1,032 yards and passed for 1,580 yards last season with a 52-percent completion rate, decent enough for a guy with supposedly no arm.

Darren Sproles, who scooted for a school-record 1,465 yards in his first season as the starter, combines with Roberson to give the Cats an option attack that would make Nebraska proud.

2. Ohio State Don't know why quarterback Craig Krenzel insists on being called by his first name. "Clutch" Krenzel sounds so much better ... and it's as accurate as one of his late-game fourth-down passes with the season on the line. His confidence is only exceeded by whiz-kid running back Maurice Clarett, who believes he can do anything on the field. There's no evidence to the contrary.

3. North Carolina State As a fourth-year starter, senior quarterback Philip Rivers should have all the ACC passing records worth holding by the time he finishes. What he really wants is a league title, and maybe even a Heisman. A Sept. 13 game at Ohio State could go a long way toward that, but he'll need help all season from T.A. McLendon, who rushed for 1,101 yards and 18 TDs last season as a freshman.

4. Virginia Tech It's showtime for running back Kevin Jones, whose ball-sharing days are over. Departed starter Lee Suggs was the touchdown-maker, but Jones is more explosive, unpredictable and just needs to prove he can hold up over the course of the season. No team has a better pair of athletes at QB than Bryan Randall (10th nationally in passing efficiency last season with a 143.1 rating) and bundle-of-potential Marcus Vick.

5. Auburn Here's where all the good running backs are. Carnell Williams has All-America skills; Ronnie Brown popped for 1,000 yards, most after Williams was hurt last season; Tre Smith rushed for 126 yards vs. Alabama when Brown was injured; Brandon Jacobs joined the cast after a stellar junior college career. Only issue: Can Jason Campbell handle the QB job full time?

6. Oklahoma State Josh Fields isn't the best quarterback you've never heard of – because you have heard of him, right? – but what's surprising is that his stats are almost off-the-charts good: 3,145 yards, 31 touchdowns and only 10 interceptions last season. Tatum Bell, a 1,000-yard rusher, and Seymore Shaw, will challenge for the top running back duo in the Big 12.

7. Tennessee Senior quarterback Casey Clausen has been doing this long enough to pile up 25 victories. He's still searching for what his brother Rick, a backup at LSU, has – an SEC championship ring. With young runners such as Cedric Houston and Gerald Riggs, who looked super in the spring, the Vols' backfield won't be the weak link in the chase for the title.

8. Michigan Quarterback John Navarre and running back Chris Perry have each had their moments – not enough of to satisfy Wolverine fans – but each is on the cusp of big things. Navarre already grades out well in the stats category with 21 TDs and seven interceptions last season; it's just that his resume is incomplete without a defining victory. Perry simply needs to pick up where he left off – as MVP of the Outback Bowl vs. Florida.

9. Purdue The Boilermakers, who led the Big Ten with 452 yards per game, have two quarterbacks that Joe Tiller feels comfortable with, although Kyle Orton ended spring as a clear No. 1 over Brandon Kirsch. Nice depth at tailback is

headed by speedy Joey Harris (1,115 yards last season), with Brandon Jones (668 yards) supplying additional muscle.

10. Florida State QB Chris Rix did his team as much harm as good last season, although maybe that will serve as the wake-up call that never came when he overslept and missed a final exam. He has a lot of talent; he now needs to play smart and be a leader. No need for him to be burdened with undue pressure because powerful RB Greg Jones returns from injury and redshirt freshman Lorenzo Booker is ready for a blast-off debut.



With Kansas State quarterback Eli Roberson running away from the competition and teaming with running back Darren Sproles, the Wildcats are tough to stop.

PHOTO BY KANSAS STATE SPORTS INFORMATION

TOP 10 RECEIVERS

1. USC Mike Williams, coming off a 1,265-yard, 14-touchdown season, is only a sophomore, and incoming freshmen Whitney Lewis and Steve Smith have the high school pedigree to do what Williams did last season – make an immediate impact.

For now, the guy who will be asked most often to keep the double-teams away from the 6-foot-5 Williams is senior Keary Colbert, who can teach the youngsters a thing or two about running precise routes. He'll be a fine third-down outlet for the new USC quarterback, as will tight end Alex Holmes, who caught 29 passes last season.

2. Texas In what is becoming a trend for Texas future pros – Ricky Williams, Leonard Davis, Quentin Jammer, et al. – Roy Williams decided it would be best to hang around Austin for his season senior. The draft gurus already say he could be a top three pick in 2004, and his numbers (64 catches, 1,142 yards and 12 TDs) should soar if he can make it through a season without hamstring troubles. Four-year partner B.J. Johnson is back, too, and Texas has a wealth of tight end possibilities.

3. Georgia The deepest group of receivers in the SEC is led by 6-4 Fred Gibson, who is bigger and stronger this season, having muscled up by about 10 pounds. The Dawgs will miss Terrence Edwards, but will cover for his absence with Damien Gary, Reggie Brown and Michael Johnson, who authored the game-winning catch against Auburn last season to clinch the SEC East.

4. Ohio State Chris Gamble was college football's busiest man last season, and Buckeyes coaches will make sure his uniform is plenty dirty at the end of 60 minutes. Gamble likely will only dabble on offense because his work as one of the nation's finest cornerbacks is invaluable ... and it's not like OSU is hurting on offense with WR Michael Jenkins, TE Ben Hartsock and eager pups whose time has come.

5. Texas Tech The evolution of the wide receiver position calls for wideouts to be 6-4 gazelles who jump as if shot out of a toaster. And then there's Tech's 5-9 Wes Welker. All he does is get open and catch the ball in one of the

nation's most pass-happy outfits. He earned second-team All-Big 12 honors last season and will lead a group that returns most of its key components.

6. Michigan Junior Braylon Edwards better be good, because he has to back up his decision to change his jersey from No. 80 to No. 1, a popular number for star receivers at Michigan, most recently David Terrell. Edwards (67 catches, 1,035 yards, 10 TDs last season) leads a group that rivals rival Ohio State in depth. Could sophomore Jason Avant be the next No. 1 after Edwards graduates?

7. Miami Even without a sure-fire star, and with a few wideouts hobbled in the spring, the sense is that the 'Canes will be more than fine. Sophomore Roscoe Parrish has some serious scotability and will help replace the production of No. 3 overall draft pick Andre Johnson. Versatile Jason Geathers and Kevin Beard, both seniors, are also at the top of the rotation, holding off, for now, the next wave of Miami superstars.

8. Wisconsin While Lee Evans sat out last season after tearing knee ligaments in the spring game, the Badgers developed a pair of freshmen – Brandon Williams (52 catches) and Jonathan Orr (47 catches, eight touchdowns). Evans should be a full-go by August as he tries to recapture his form of 2001, when he posted a Big Ten record 1,545 receiving yards. Another good receiving option: 6-6 Darrin Charles.

9. LSU Michael Clayton, who has 104 catches in the past two seasons, will make a play to be the best receiver in the SEC. Devery Henderson had a big spring, and will soon be known for more than his catch of the twice-tipped pass that he turned into a final-play 75-yard touchdown to stun Kentucky. Sophomore Skyler Green should be a dandy; just add playing time.

10. Clemson The Tigers will focus on restoring a moribund running game but know they can count on a passing attack featuring Kevin Youngblood, Derrick Hamilton and Airese Curry. Combined with promising passer Charlie Whitehurst, who snatched the job late last season, the receivers should be able to do their part in keeping coach Tommy Bowden away from the hot seat.

TOP 10 OFFENSIVE LINES

1. Oklahoma The Sooners have questions at quarterback, where probable starter Jason White keeps wrecking his knees and the young guys are, well, young and inexperienced. But given a choice between having the combination of a veteran line and shaky quarterbacks or a shaky line and veteran quarterbacks, coaches will take the former.

That's what Oklahoma has.

Bob Stoops has built the best offensive line in his tenure at Oklahoma, one so good that maybe it's the only one that could stop the Sooners' best-in-the-nation defensive line.

2. Michigan Shades of Bo Schembechler, this Wolverine line conjures images of past UM greats. Of course, that might just be wishful thinking from Lloyd Carr and the Big Blue crazies, because the past couple of lines weren't known for blasting massive holes for the running backs. Athletic guard David Baas and tackle Tony Pape figure to vie for All-America honors.

3. Ohio State No, offense wasn't exactly the strength of the Buckeyes' national championship team, and, among the O-linemen, only tackle Shane Olivea earned some sort of postseason recognition, selected second-team All-Big Ten. This season, the projection is for the line, returning intact with key backups, to play a starring role and give Maurice Clarett more room than he needs. Olivea and center Alex Stepanovich are the headliners.

4. Alabama The best thing the Tide has going for it is the SEC's top line, which really means something because it's a good year for linemen in the conference. Six-foot-8 tackle Wesley Britt earned first-team all-league honors as a sophomore, while guard Justin Smiley received second-team recognition from the coaches. Will they be as efficient pass-blocking as they were run-blocking for Dennis Franchione?

5. Miami It's a testament to Miami that this might be the 'Canes least heralded line in the past three seasons ... and it's still the envy of most of the nation. Coach Larry Coker tinkered with combinations in the spring, which will

just add to the line's versatility and allow the five best guys to get on the field. All-America candidates: Carlos Joseph, Chris Myers and Vernon Carey.

6. Auburn While the Tigers' backfield poses the kind of problem a coach loves – gee, which of four super running backs do I give the ball to today? – there probably won't be much consternation when Tommy Tuberville has to decide which direction to run in clutch time. With sophomore tackle Marcus McNeill and senior guard Monreko Crittenden flattening defenders on the right side, look for the Tigers to lean that way.

7. USC It's been a few years or more since the Trojans had anything resembling a Top 10 line, an honor that used to be considered a USC birthright. The tradition is coming back thanks to senior tackle Jacob Rogers and the anointed Next Great USC Blocker, sophomore Winston Justice, a 12-game starter as a true freshman.

8. LSU A new rotation of running backs should be living the good life behind a line that returns four starters, including first-team All-SEC guard Stephen Peterman. Junior center Ben Wilkerson knows his way around the SEC trenches, and can impart that wisdom to talented (and humungous) sophomores Andrew Whitworth and Terrell McGill.

9. Arizona State The offensive line is often a Sun Devils' strength, and it should be again with all five starters returning. There will be a new look, though, as left tackle Regis Crawford moves to a more natural right guard spot, with Drew Hodgdon shifting to center and right tackle Chaz White going to the left side. Versatility and depth – that's a good thing.

10. Missouri Tigers fans are giddy over sophomore quarterback Brad Smith, who became the second player in NCAA history to pass for more than 2,000 yards and run for more than 1,000 in a season last year. How 'bout some props for the line? It returns intact, led by All-America candidate Rob Droege at tackle.

UNIT RANKINGS

DEFENSE

TOP 10 DEFENSIVE LINES

1. Oklahoma OU coaches regret that All-Big 12 end Jimmy Wilkerson was lured away from school early by the false promise of immediate NFL gold (he was a sixth-round pick, No. 189 overall). Opponents, though, will be the ones crying a river.

Oklahoma returns seven of its top eight linemen, with speed, power and experience across the board. The Sooners should be stingier than they were against the run a year ago (3.0 yards per attempt) and have even more gitty-up to the QB (36 sacks).

Tommie Harris leads an excellent four-man rotation at tackle and is in line for a huge year after a so-so sophomore season due to a groin injury. Look for junior Jonathan Jackson to be OU's next great end.

2. Texas Outside of Oklahoma (OK, and maybe Miami, too), it will be hard to find a better pair of middle men than 300-pounders Marcus Tubbs and Rodrique Wright. Tubbs, a senior, is considered a potential first-rounder. The pay-for-play league will have to wait on Wright, a true sophomore; he was the Big 12's Defensive Freshman of the Year. End Kalen Thornton will be key in a defense that allowed 307 yards per game last season and had 38 sacks.

3. USC The Trojans publicity machine boasts in print that "USC's defensive line is the best in the nation." How about settling for "best in the West," fellas? There's a reason why USC has a good chance of overcoming its inexperience at quarterback to win the Pac-10, and it starts with a no-holes line starring end Kenechi Udeze and tackle Shaun Cody, returning from injury.

4. Miami Massive tackle Vince Wilfork would have been a first-round pick if he had entered the draft after last season – not bad for a backup – and should improve his 2002 numbers (seven sacks, 15 tackles for loss) with increased playing time in a thinner rotation at tackle. He will need to be the crew chief on a line lacking only experience.

5. Iowa Hawkeyes coach Kirk Ferentz is known for developing offensive linemen, but this season, he will bank on his defensive big boys. Either end can create havoc; Howard Hodges earned All-Big Ten honors last season with nine sacks, which is the total that Matt Roth had in league games only. The middle will be as plugged as last season when Iowa yielded 81.9 rushing yards per game.

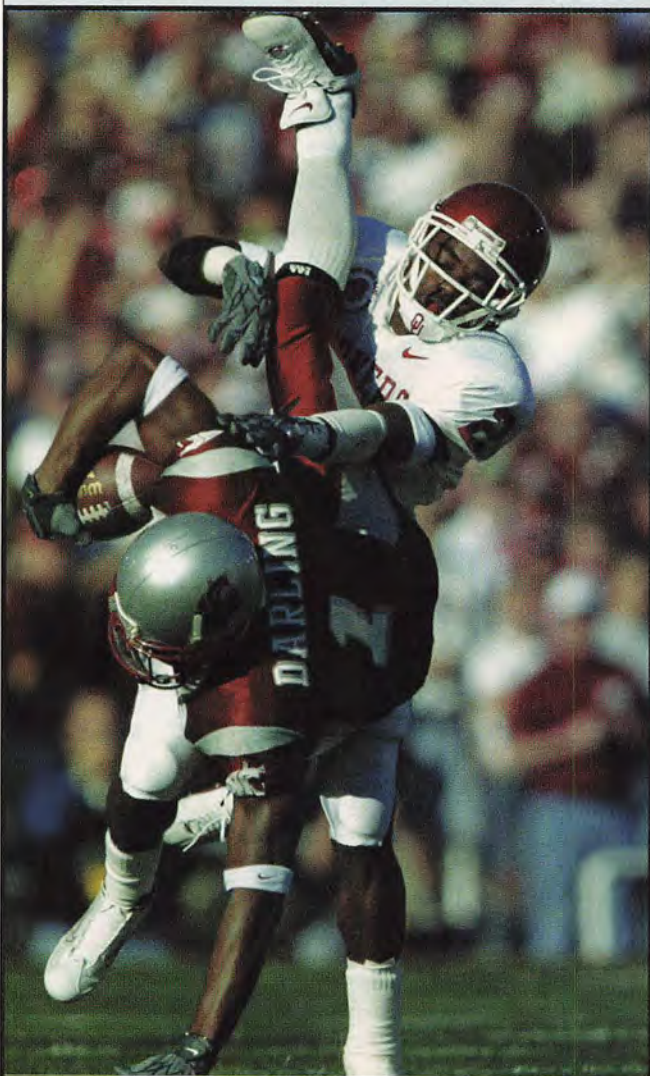
6. Ohio State Yikes ... you know defensive line is the deepest position group in the country when the defending national champs – the team no one could run on last season – is only sixth. Buckeyes fans can make their case with three of four returning starters, including end Will Smith, who should punch a big NFL ticket after the season, and inside-outside threat Darrius Scott.

7. Georgia With the Bulldogs rebuilding their linebacking corps, it's a good thing not much will get past the front wall. Even with tackle Johnathan Sullivan leaving early to the NFL for first-round glory, Georgia has star power with SEC Player of the Year David Pollack (14 sacks). Kedric Golston and Darrius Swain are sophomore tackles who could soon be terrors.

8. Virginia Tech Several of Tech's linemen were nursing injuries this spring, and tackle Jimmy E. Williams was suspended, but all should be well for coordinator Bud Foster in the fall. The Hokies expect to have their hallmark speed, and with senior end Nathaniel Adibi adding more size and muscle to his game, he'll make his long-awaited run at All-America honors.

9. Michigan The Wolverines are set for this season, with a possible all-senior four-man front, including tackle Grant Bowman and end Larry Stevens. Coach Lloyd Carr has few worries here for the future, as the first string will be pushed by a strong group of second-string underclassmen – ends Pat Massey and Jeremy Van Alstyne and tackles Gabe Watson and Larry Harrison.

10. LSU With the combination of tackle Chad Lavalais and end Marcus Spears, the Tigers are in elite SEC status on the line; the only thing missing is a nasty attitude that Lavalais, a senior, will be asked to provide. Spears, at times, looks like a top NFL prospect and junior end Marquise Hill is growing into his potential, as well.



Oklahoma's Derrick Strait is known more for his coverage ability, but the senior cornerback can also turn a receiver's world upside down.

TOP 10 LINEBACKERS

1. Oklahoma The new Linebacker U? Rocky Calmus earned the Butkus Award in 2000, and Torrance Marshall was a monster, earning Orange Bowl MVP honors as the Sooners won the national title. Don't be surprised if a Sooner picks up the Butkus this season en route to a championship, too.

Question is, which linebacker?

Teddy Lehman was a finalist for the award last season; he and inside 'backer Lance Mitchell could both be this season. They combined for 236 tackles last season, 36 for loss. OU, which often uses five defensive backs, plugs in Pasha Jackson – probably a star on many other teams – as a third linebacker when needed.

2. Miami If Oklahoma doesn't land two of the three Butkus Award finalists, Miami certainly could. Seniors Jonathan Vilma and D.J. Williams will spend the fall trying to outdo each other while planting running backs into the turf. With the 'Canes needing to get by scrambling QBs such as Pittsburgh's Rod Rutherford and Virginia Tech's Bryan Randall (and Marcus Vick) to win the Big East, this pair of LBs will have to be large in the biggest games.

3. Auburn OK, so if neither Oklahoma nor Miami places two players among the Butkus finalists, then the best bet is Auburn. Super-athletic Karlos Dansby will make the highlight plays while Dontarrious Thomas, moved to the middle this season, packs a wallop. Sophomore Travis Williams will quietly, for now, play in the shadows until his senior teammates move on to an eager NFL.

4. Alabama The Tide's front-line linebackers aren't quite in the class of those starring on *Lindy's* top three teams at the position, but Alabama has quality across the board and won't let state pal Auburn get all the linebacker love. Brooks Daniels, with 109 tackles last season, and Cornelius Wortham flank sophomore Freddie Roach, who could be one of the nation's top middle linebackers sooner rather than later.

5. Texas The Longhorns think their defense has more speed this season; Derrick Johnson has always had plenty of it. He's used it to make 195 tackles in his first two seasons, and he's the centerpiece of a defense that will rank with the

nation's finest. Reed Boyd was actually the team's leading tackler last season (123), but has been moved from the middle to make way for sophomore Garnet Smith.

6. Florida State Stalwarts Kendyll Pope and Michael Boulware each had offseason shoulder surgery, which allowed the Seminoles to get a long look at an overflow of young studs. Coaches raved over sophomore A.J. Nicholson, while Buster Davis and Sam McGrew improved, too. This is FSU's best and deepest position group, coached by former Baylor head coach Kevin Steele.

7. USC The Trojans know exactly what outside linebackers Matt Grootegoed and Melvin Simmons can do, which in Grootegoed's case is be the best defender in the Pac-10. He's a bit undersized, but take your pick of clichés – he's either got a real good motor or he plays as if his hair's on fire. In the middle, Lofa Tatupu, the son of former USC and New England Patriots fullback Mosi Tatupu, stepped up in the spring.

8. Tennessee If the starters stay healthy – something none was able to do last season – then the Vols are even better than this ranking suggests. Kevin Burnett could be Tennessee's best defender, and he also will see time as a rush end, increasing his play-making possibilities. Athletic Kevin Simon and Robert Peace will clean up everything else.

9. Colorado State The Rams have three seniors, all three-year starters, at linebacker, which is more rare than a perfectly spelled e-mail. None is expected to contend for All-America honors, but, with all that experience and leadership, Colorado State's crew is greater than the sum of its parts. Not to say that Eric Pauly isn't very, very good.

10. Wisconsin The Badgers' strength is that everyone is back from last season, including Jeff Mack, who was last seen earning MVP honors in the Alamo Bowl. It's easy to project a season of 100-plus tackles for Mack after he had 72 last season despite being limited to eight games because of injury. He and Alex Lewis will rate among Barry Alvarez's best pair ever on the inside.

TOP 10 DEFENSIVE BACKS

1. Miami A year ago, this was a huge question mark for a Miami team coming off a national championship. Proving that the Hurricanes reload as fast, if not faster, than anyone, four new starters helped Miami lead the country in pass defense last season.

The 'Canes allowed only eight passing touchdowns, tied for the second-lowest figure in the country, and gave up through the air what most teams yield on the ground – 4.41 yards per pass attempt. No other defense was below five yards per throw.

Everyone's back, including supersized and supercharged free safety Sean Taylor. Corners Antrel Rolle and Kelly Jennings can lock down just about anyone, and strong safety Maurice Sikes is nobody's lightweight. Could Miami sweep all four secondary spots on the All-Big East team?

2. Oklahoma Even using a scheme that requires five defensive backs much of the time, Oklahoma still has an overflow of defensive backs. Part of the reason for the logjam is the addition of junior college transfer Donte Nicholson, who had a big spring to earn the starting strong safety spot, allowing speedy Eric Bassey to return to the corner opposite All-America candidate Derrick Strait.

3. Purdue There's nothing that Big Ten quarterbacks can do to surprise four-year starter Stuart Schweigert, who has already been a two-time semifinalist for the Thorpe Award and who has already claimed Purdue's career interception lead with 13. The Boilers, who had (statistically) the best defense in the Big Ten, also return corners Jacques Reeves and Antwaan Rogers.

4. Arkansas Since teams couldn't run on Arkansas last season, they kept on testing the airways, which led to some unseemly numbers for the Hogs' secondary – they ranked 83rd nationally in pass defense. That's a fine case of misleading statistics, because those around the SEC know that Lawrence Richardson and Ahmad Carroll are the league's best corner combination.

5. Georgia The defending SEC champs return all four starters, including safety Kentrell Curry, who earned second-team all-league honors last season. Tim Jennings, selected to the conference's all-freshman team a year ago, won a starting spot in the spring ... and then was arrested with four teammates

for misdemeanor drug possession in late April and drew a two-game suspension. The Bulldogs have the talent to cover his brief absence.

6. Michigan What was arguably the nation's finest cover man doing playing safety in the spring? To hear coach Lloyd Carr tell it, it was to give Marlin Jackson more versatility. It also will allow the Wolverines to have more mix-and-match options – and they have loads of good ones – when they see four- and five-receiver sets, which – roll over, Woody – they will see from time to time in the Big Ten.

7. Texas With the departure of Rod Babers, Nathan Vasher takes over the role as the Longhorns' must-have shut-down corner, with an eye toward challenging Oklahoma's Derrick Strait as the Big 12's top cornerback. Safety Dakarai Pearson is an ex-quarterback who knows where to be and when, and then he has the athleticism to make the play on the ball.

8. Maryland Considering that all but one ACC team returns its starting quarterback (many of whom are top-notch throwers), Maryland has what everyone else wants – the best secondary in the league. Safety Madieu Williams is being touted as a first-round NFL pick in 2004, and corner Domonique Foxworth earned first-team all-league honors last year as a sophomore.

9. Tennessee Rashad Baker (All-SEC last year) and Gibril Wilson (82 tackles despite starting only half of the season) are among the top safety duos in the country. One cornerback position is set, with senior Jabari Greer. The only issue is the opposite side, but redshirt freshman Antwan Stewart was one of the team's most improved players in the spring. If he can handle game action, the Vols' secondary is whole.

10. UCLA Here's the only position group where the Bruins rank better than crosstown rival USC – but barely. The Trojans' faithful could make a strong case for their secondary to be included in the national top 10, but, hey, give the Bruins credit for multi-talented cornerback Matt Ware and rising star Jarrad Page, a sophomore safety who started 10 games last season.

GOTTA HAVE THE REAL THING, BABY

BY ANTHONY GIMINO

You love your reality TV? We've got your reality programming right here.

College football is the Best Damn Reality Show, Period, what with 16 weeks of riveting regular-season action, where it's often one-and-done in the national title chase.

Sure beats three lousy weeks of March Madness.

It always adds up to a better version of *Survivor* — with all the blood and guts, but no drinking or eating of them.

This season, though, looks to be more like an episode of *Mr. Personality*, where masked suitors are judged on everything but their looks.

And once that mask comes off — that is, once the season

starts — you never know what you're going to get. It could be a whole lot of ugly.

Three teams stand above the rest — Oklahoma, Miami and Ohio State. Not much debate there. But none is the mortal lock you might find in another season. The quarterback position could turn into an unsightly blemish for both the Sooners and 'Canes, while Ohio State ... well, c'mon, the defending champ wasn't that pretty of a team last year.

Odds are, only one will turn out to be the real deal.

In each of the five years of the BCS, half of the national championship matchup featured a team that was ranked No. 1 or 2 in the Associated Press preseason poll.

Ah, but in four of those years, the other side of the field has

been filled with teams deemed in the preseason no better than a double-digit midget. And three of the preseason underdogs have turned out to be top dogs by the end.

PRESEASON RANKINGS TO TITLE GAME

SEASON	CHAMPION	RUNNER-UP
1998	Tennessee (10)	Florida State (2)
1999	Florida State (1)	Virginia Tech (13)
2000	Oklahoma (19)	Florida State (2)
2001	Miami (2)	Nebraska (4)
2002	Ohio State (13)	Miami (1)

Ultimately, it will be decided on the field — Outhustle, Outhit, Outscore! — without the abusive commentary from Simon, but with a little voting help from the BCS computers. Until then, getting there is all the fun on our spin around the college football dial:

Fear Factor: We make Dennis Franchione step foot in Tuscaloosa again.

Get Me Out of Here, I'm a Celebrity: Flashback to the last thing old pals Dennis Erickson and Mike Price said when they left the Pac-10's most remote outposts — Oregon State and Washington State — for the bright lights of the San Francisco 49ers and University of Alabama.

America's Most Talented Kid (Brother): All about Virginia Tech redshirt freshman quarterback Marcus Vick, who challenged talented incumbent Bryan Randall for playing time in the spring. Vick might be further along in his development at this early stage than his NFL hot stuff brother Michael, the 2001 NFL top draft choice. Eli Manning qualifies here, too, but he's on a bigger marquee ...

American Idol: Our winner: Eli Manning. In Mississippi, the Mannings are something of a royal family, and this season, the last in the current line — Eli, son of Archie, brother of Tennessee traitor Peyton — can graduate from being a Southern icon to the nation's favorite gunslinging quarterback ... especially if he leads the Rebels to their first SEC title in 40 years.

Who Wants to be a Millionaire: Contestants limited to anyone who puts a whistle around his neck. In the Big 12 alone, there

are seven coaches making at least \$1 million a year ... and that includes a guy who has a losing record in two years of head coaching experience (new Baylor boss Guy Morriss). About a third of the 63 BCS teams have a coach pulling down a cool mil, with many others just a Lexus away. Remember, it wasn't until late November 1995 that a football coach (Florida State's Bobby Bowden) was awarded a million-dollar contract.

Fear Factor II: We give BCS officials the choice of being dunked into a pit of live, venomous snakes or having three undefeated teams after the regular season.

Amazing Race: Our Heisman special. When guys like USC QB Carson Palmer, Iowa QB Brad Banks, Penn State RB Larry Johnson

and Miami RB Willis McGahee come from way back on the national depth chart to challenge for the Heisman top spot ... well, that just points out how stupid it is to make predicting the Heisman a year-around pursuit. But the hype monster is hungry. So we feed it. Looking for some longshots in a race that is likely to be as crazy as last season's? How about North Carolina State RB T.A. McLendon, Missouri QB Brad Smith and Michigan QB John Navarre.

Joe Millionaire: Starring Rick Neuheisel. In a perfect bit of casting, Slick Rick fills the role of a guy who keeps on lying to make people like him. With a resume that includes frequent work on the fringes of the truth,

Neuheisel won the audition for our show when he crossed the line and brought his athletic department into his web of deceit by having his sports information director use official UW letterhead to falsely deny his contact with the San Francisco 49ers.

Star Search: Always looking for the next big thing in college football, our finalists include:

- Texas A&M junior Jason Carter. A little-used backup quarterback who was converted to Dennis Franchione's pet "A-back" position, the jack-of-all-trades runner/receiver/returner, posted 181 total yards in the Aggies' spring game.

- Virginia freshman linebacker Ahmad Brooks. He was, in some circles, the nation's top high school defender in 2001. After needing more time to work on academics, he enrolled in January and made an immediate impression. His mere appearance in the spring



game ignited a huge roar from the crowd. Said coach Al Groh: "He makes the crowd buzz, huh?"

- Oklahoma defensive back Donte Nicholson. A strong safety from Mount San Antonio (Calif.) Junior College, he was buried in praise from coach Bob Stoops this spring as he earned a starting spot and might be the Sooners' missing puzzle piece.

- UTEP kicker Holly Cohen. After New Mexico's Katie Hnida had an extra point blocked in the Las Vegas Bowl, the race is still on to become the first woman to score in a major-college football game. Best bet is Cohen, a Miners' soccer star who was 5-for-5 on field goals (long of 37) in the spring game, fueling talk that she might get a PAT opportunity early in the season. *Ms. Cohen, the Today Show on line one ...*

Extreme Makeover: After last year's players' revolt at Arizona and subsequent tearful apology from John Mackovic, we follow the aristocratic head coach in his search for his kinder, gentler side. Our suggestion for image makeover: Lose the business suits, liberally borrow sweater vests from Jim Tressel's closet.

Are You Hot? Ohio State's Maurice Clarett is when he's running all over the field. Not so much when he's running his mouth off the field.

THE BCS MATCHUPS

Sugar Bowl

Jan. 4, 2004, 7 p.m. ET

No. 1 vs. No. 2

Lindy's pick: Oklahoma vs. Miami

Other prime candidates: Ohio State, Michigan, Auburn

Rose Bowl

Jan. 1, 2004, 5 p.m. ET

Pac-10 champ vs. Big Ten champ

Lindy's pick: USC vs. Ohio State

Other prime candidates: Washington, Michigan

Orange Bowl

Jan. 1, 2004, 8:30 p.m. ET

ACC or Big East champ vs. BCS at-large

Lindy's pick: Maryland vs. Auburn

Other prime candidates: Florida State, North Carolina State, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia

Fiesta Bowl

Jan. 2, 2004, 8 p.m. ET

Big 12 champ vs. BCS at-large

Lindy's pick: Texas vs. Michigan*

Other prime candidates: Kansas State, Tennessee

*Replaces Oklahoma, which is in the national title Sugar Bowl.

Coaching Changes

Texas A&M fired the biggest winner on the list — R.C. Slocum — but also stands to be the biggest winner by hiring Dennis Franchione. It was the kind of move better made now, before Oklahoma and Texas run out of sight in the Big 12 South.

Overall, the BCS conferences stood relatively pat, with only four firings — Baylor, Michigan State, A&M and UCLA.

With the departure of Bobby Williams at Michigan State and the addition of Karl Dorrell at UCLA, the number of African-American head coaches in Division I-A remained at four out of 117 — 3.4 percent.

School	Out	Record, Yrs	In
Alabama	Dennis Franchione	17-8 (2 yrs)	Mike Price
Franchione dissed 'Bama Nation by bolting Tuscaloosa for Texas A&M; Price dissappointed 'Bama Nation with his ungentlemanly behavior in the spring.			

Ball State	Bill Lynch	37-53 (8 yrs)	Brady Hoke
After a 6-6 season, the Cardinals turned to Hoke, a former Ball State linebacker who spent the past eight years as a Michigan assistant.			

Baylor	Kevin Steele	9-36 (4 yrs)	Guy Morriss
While Morriss brought his multiple spread offense from Kentucky, Steele landed on his feet as linebackers coach at Florida State.			

Bowling Green	Urban Meyer	17-6 (2 yrs)	Gregg Brandon
One of the game's hot young coaches, Meyer hopped on the next steppingstone to Utah; Brandon, the assistant head coach, was the players' choice.			

East Carolina	Steve Logan	69-58 (11 yrs)	John Thompson
Thompson jumps from Florida defensive coordinator to head coach. The last two to do so: Marshall's Bob Pruett and Oklahoma's Bob Stoops. Not bad.			

Houston	Dana Dimel	8-26 (3 yrs)	Art Briles
Dimel's time was cut short after building a 5-7 season in 2002. In his place, the Cougars get a guy who has lived and breathed football in the state of Texas.			

Kentucky	Guy Morriss	9-14 (2 yrs)	Rich Brooks
Outbid for Morriss by Baylor, Kentucky flirted with Bill Parcells and others before reaching back for the ex-Oregon and ex-St. Louis Rams boss.			

La-Monroe	Mike Collins	3-6 (1 yr)	Tim Rebowe
Collins fared well enough after Bobby Keasler's early season resignation, but stepped down in April after an arrest for suspicion of DWI, leaving Rebowe as interim coach while the search dragged on.			

Louisville John L. Smith 41-21 (5 yrs) Bob Petrino
Not much more Smith could have done at Louisville, so he left for greener Michigan State pastures. Petrino was the O-coordinator at Auburn.

Michigan St. Bobby Williams 16-17 (3 yrs) John L. Smith
Williams' 2002 season was a pure mess on and off the field. Now Smith gets to find out what big-conference pressure is all about.

Oregon State Dennis Erickson 31-17 (4 yrs) Mike Riley
Two coaches with unfinished business: Erickson in the NFL with the 49ers, Riley back at Oregon State to continue what he helped start in '97-98.

Texas A&M R.C. Slocum 123-47-2 (14 yrs) Dennis Franchione
Not even a .721 winning percentage could save Slocum from the new AD's axe; program-builder Franchione has solid foundation this time.

Tulsa Keith Burns 7-28 (3 yrs) Steve Kragthorpe
Kragthorpe, 38, was hired off the staff of the Buffalo Bills, where he coached Drew Bledsoe and the rest of the QBs. Burns lost 20 of his final 21 games.

UCLA Bob Toledo 49-32 (7 yrs) Karl Dorrell
Not the big-dollar pick a school like UCLA might have been able to attract, but Dorrell is a young coach (39) who bleeds powder blue and has lots of upside.

Utah Ron McBride 88-63 (13 yrs) Urban Meyer
Nice-guy McBride had started to tread water. Utah hopes Meyer and his glitzy offense brings back the winning ... and the fans.

Washington St. Mike Price 83-77 (14 yrs) Bill Doba
Price was maxed out at Washington State, leaving faithful Doba, a Cougar assistant for 14 years, his first college head coaching job. Mike Levenseller waits in the wings.

Wyoming Vic Koenning 5-29 (3 yrs) Joe Glenn
Glenn, who had a I-AA power at Montana said, "It's an opportunity to coach at the highest level in the nation." Was he talking about Laramie's altitude?

Five Programs On The Rise

Virginia — Maryland and N.C. State have already "risen" in the ACC ... and now comes Al Groh's fine recruiting and pro-style approach to challenge FSU.

TCU — Young backfield of QB Tye Gunn and RB Lonta Hobbs makes Frogs ready to consistently push aside Louisville as Conference USA's top program.

Central Florida — With the Knights' ready supply of local talent, it seems only a matter of time before UCF-Marshall becomes



Photo by Bruce Schwartzman

Foes now fear Cavs. Virginia cries wolf no more.

the annual MAC game of the year.

Missouri — Gary Pinkel has his quarterback centerpiece — sophomore Brad Smith. If he gets a defense, the Big 12 big boys better be watching their backs.

Connecticut — Football might not make it to the level of the UConn hoops programs, but it has resources — a new stadium, etc. — and a conference to join (Big East, 2005).



Photo by Ronald Martinez/Getty Images



Photo by Matthew Stockman/Getty Images

Will Husker fans accept more six-loss seasons from Solich?

Five People On The Hot Seat

Frank Solich, Nebraska

The next coaching shake-up in Lincoln will see Solich, not his assistants, get shucked.

Dan Guerrero, UCLA

First-year athletic director will be judged more on basketball hire, but took a chance on unproven head coach Karl Dorrell.

Chris Rix, Florida State

Has to be a solid leader, perfect citizen — and a darn fine QB — to atone for 2002 missteps.

Ron Zook, Florida

Borrowed some time with super recruiting, but more winning is the only currency that matters.

How about the Hokies' Hall ... he can beat you both ways.

John Navarre, Michigan

If quarterback doesn't stem rival Ohio State's momentum, legacy will read: "Three-time loser to Buckeyes."

Double-duty doings

It was a novelty when Michigan cornerback Charles Woodson won the Heisman in 1997 by wooing voters with his two-way work at receiver (as well as his electric punt returns).

Five years later, Ohio State's Chris Gamble did the "reverse Woodson" by moving from receiver to cornerback at mid-season ... and then did Woodson one better by starting at both positions. His 60-minute work was a necessity for Ohio State to win the national title.

And now, we've got ourselves a trend.

In addition to Gamble, here are four more defensive backs/receivers who could be two-way starters in 2003:

- **DeAngelo Hall, Virginia Tech.** He was already the Hokies' top cornerback and punt returner; he ended spring in line to get 30 plays or so per game at wideout, too.

- **Keiwan Ratliff, Florida.** A full-time starting cornerback, Ratliff also started two games at receiver last season and caught a 33-yard TD pass in the Outback Bowl.

- **Mark Jones, Tennessee.** The Vols' missing playmaker could be right here, after the starting safety caught four passes for 152 yards and two TDs in the spring game.

- **Illinois Eric McGoey.** He's projected as a starter at safety, and will be called on to help a young receiving corps and play on almost all special teams.

Comeback Players of the Year

You could fill a stretch Hummer limo with running backs who played barely or not at all last season due to injury. As such, it might be time to create a new postseason award – the MVT.

Most Valuable Trainer.

The list of hobbled running backs trying to sprint back to greatness includes former national rushing leaders, such as Nevada's Chance Kretschmer (2001's champ with 1,732 yards), Utah's Marty Johnson (who was No. 1 after two games last season) and Georgia Tech's Tony Hollings (who had the lead after four games last year). All are trying to come back from knee injuries.

The list also features:

■ Maryland's Bruce Perry, the 2001 ACC Player of the Year who returned late last season from a knee injury to rush for a piddling 341 yards. He appeared to be back in top form this spring.

■ Florida State's Greg Jones, a bullish 250-pounder who could have been a first-round choice in the 2003 draft if he hadn't blown out his knee with five games left in last season. He'll face competition this fall from hotshot redshirt freshman Lorenzo Booker.

■ Miami's Frank Gore, a legit Heisman threat after missing last season because of a spring knee injury. He was the heir apparent to Clinton Portis before Gore's injury allowed Willis McGahee to pick up the baton.

■ Auburn junior Carnell Williams, making his way back from a season-ending fractured leg and ankle problems. He has All-America potential, although he's not likely to get enough carries for that in a jam-packed Tigers backfield. Still, he's Auburn's hottest bolt of lightning.

More?

There's former All-Pac-10 back Clarence Farmer of Arizona; he's trying to overcome a knee injury, a spring suspension and some academic hot water. And Minnesota's Marion Barber III, who rushed for 742 yards as a freshman, averaging 6.3 yards a carry, before taking a medical redshirt last season because of hamstring problems. And don't forget SMU's ShanDerrick Charles, who had two 200-yard games as a true freshman in 2001 and was ready to become a national name last season before stress fractures in his back forced him to redshirt.

Other comebacks of sorts include Notre Dame's Julius Jones, whose fate was to be determined in the summer after missing

last season due to academics, and Arkansas' Cedric Cobbs.

Razorbacks coach Houston Nutt, who coached at Oklahoma State during the days of Barry Sanders and Thurman Thomas, once gushed that Cobbs could be better than either of those stars. That was after Cobbs' sensational 1999 freshman season; since then, Cobbs has battled injuries, legal troubles and a trip to Nutt's doghouse. Slimmed down to 225, Cobbs, a co-starter at the end of spring, has a final chance at stardom.

... and Non-RBS, too

In addition to all the studs coming back from injuries at running back, here are five All-America players who missed at least a majority of last season and have something to prove all over again as they try to regain their previous form.

■ Fresno State WR Bernard Berrian

- 2001: Broke WAC single-season record with 2,776 all-purpose yards.
- 2002: Suffered season-ending knee injury in opener vs. Wisconsin.
- 2003: Explosive returner joins forces with Marque Davis to give young gun QB Paul Pinegar two excellent receiving targets.

■ Tennessee LB Kevin Burnett

- 2001: Made 52 tackles, with 6.5 for loss, including 3.5 sacks.
- 2002: Poised for breakout year, suffered season-ending knee injury in opener.
- 2003: Tennessee willing to build defense around Burnett, a potential All-American at outside linebacker who can also play rush end.

■ USC DT Shaun Cody

- 2001: Freshman All-American with 39 stops, five sacks.
- 2002: Honorable mention All-Pac-10 despite missing final seven games.
- 2003: Missed spring because of knee, but expected to return in fall to what could be nation's top D-line. He might be talented team's most talented player.

■ Wisconsin WR Lee Evans

- 2001: Finalist for Biletnikoff Award after 75 catches for 1,545 yards, nine TDs.
- 2002: Blew out his knee in spring game and couldn't make it back in the fall.
- 2003: Fifth-year senior rejoins high-powered Wisconsin offense; in 2001, he caught five TDs of more than 30 yards from Jim Sorgi, the projected 2003 starter.

■ Georgia Tech DE Greg Gathers

- 2001: Led ACC with 10 sacks; all-league for second consecutive year.
- 2002: Played in only three games due to kidney ailment.
- 2003: School's career sack leader (31) wasn't cleared for contact in the spring, but should be ready in the fall at one of Tech's strongest positions.



Frank Gore

Photo by Elliot Schreiber/Getty Images

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The 2004 NFL Draft

Here's our annual look to the future ... 2003 college players with the brightest NFL futures heading into the 2004 NFL Draft.

No.	Player	Pos.	Team
1	Eli Manning	QB	Ole Miss
2	Tommie Harris*	DT	Oklahoma
3	Roy Williams	WR	Texas
4	Vince Wilfork*	DT	Miami
5	Reggie Williams*	WR	Washington
6	D.J. Williams	LB	Miami
7	Marlin Jackson*	CB	Michigan
8	Kellen Winslow*	TE	Miami
9	Kevin Jones*	RB	Virginia Tech
10	Shawn Andrews*	OT	Arkansas
11	Chris Gamble*	CB	Ohio State
12	Will Smith	DE	Ohio State
13	Rashaun Woods	WR	Oklahoma State
14	Frank Gore*	RB	Miami
15	Jonathan Vilma	LB	Miami
16	Derrick Strait	CB	Oklahoma
17	Karlos Dansby	LB	Auburn
18	Robert Gallery	OT	Iowa
19	Lance Mitchell	LB	Oklahoma
20	Nat Dorsey*	OT	Georgia Tech
21	Lee Evans	WR	Wisconsin
22	Derrick Johnson*	LB	Texas
23	Ben Roethlisberger*	QB	Miami (Ohio)
24	Marcus Tubbs	DT	Texas
25	Steven Jackson*	RB	Oregon State
26	Teddy Lehman	LB	Oklahoma
27	Sean Taylor*	S	Miami
28	Greg Jones	RB	Florida State
29	Madieu Williams	S	Maryland
30	Claude Harriott	DE	Pittsburgh
31	Brandon Everage	S	Oklahoma
32	David Pollack*	DE	Georgia
33	Rod Davis	LB	Southern Miss
34	Jerricho Cotchery	WR	North Carolina State
35	Darrion Scott	DL	Ohio State
36	Michael Boulware	LB	Florida State
37	DeMarco McNeil	DT	Auburn
38	Carlos Joseph*	OT	Miami
39	Dexter Reid*	S	North Carolina
40	Fred Gibson*	WR	Georgia
41	Braylon Edwards*	WR	Michigan
42	Darnell Dockett	DT	Florida State
43	Casey Clausen	QB	Tennessee
44	Tony Pape	OT	Michigan
45	Matt Schaub	QB	Virginia
46	Shannon Snell	OG	Florida
47	Darius Watts	WR	Marshall
48	Randy Starks*	DT	Maryland
49	Grant Wiley	LB	West Virginia
50	Antonio Hall	OT	Kentucky

*Junior

Top Awards Candidates

HEISMAN TROPHY

Outstanding Player
Downtown Athletic Club of New York

1. Maurice Claret, RB, Ohio State
 2. Eli Manning, QB, Ole Miss
 3. Frank Gore, RB, Miami
 4. Roy Williams, WR, Texas
 5. Chris Gamble, DB/WR, Ohio State
 6. Kevin Jones, RB, Virginia Tech
 7. Philip Rivers, QB, North Carolina State
 8. Casey Clausen, QB, Tennessee
 9. Reggie Williams, WR, Washington
 10. Eli Roberson, QB, Kansas State
- 2002 winner: Carson Palmer, USC

BRONKO NAGURSKI AWARD

Outstanding Defensive Player
Charlotte TD Club/FWAA

1. David Pollack, DE, Georgia
 2. Teddy Lehman, LB, Oklahoma
 3. Jonathan Vilma, LB, Miami
 4. Will Smith, DE, Ohio State
 5. Shawn Taylor, S, Miami
 6. Rod Davis, LB, Southern Miss
 7. Karlos Dansby, LB, Auburn
 8. Michael Boulware, LB, Florida State
 9. Kevin Burnett, LB, Tennessee
 10. Courtney Watson, LB, Notre Dame
- 2002 winner: Terrell Suggs, DE, Arizona State

OUTLAND TROPHY

Interior Lineman
Football Writers Association of America

1. Shawn Andrews, OT, Arkansas
 2. Tommie Harris, DT, Oklahoma
 3. Vince Wilfork, DT, Miami
 4. Robert Gallery, OT, Iowa
 5. Brandon Kennedy, DT, North Texas
- 2002 winner: Rien Long, DT, Washington State

LOMBARDI AWARD

Lineman/Linebacker
Rotary Club of Houston

1. David Pollack, DE, Georgia
 2. Teddy Lehman, LB, Oklahoma
 3. Will Smith, DE, Ohio State
 4. Derrick Johnson, LB, Texas
 5. Karlos Dansby, LB, Auburn
- 2002 winner: Terrell Suggs, DE, Arizona State

DAVEY O'BRIEN AWARD

Quarterback
Charitable Trust of Fort Worth

1. Eli Manning, Ole Miss
 2. Philip Rivers, North Carolina State
 3. Cody Pickett, Washington
 4. Casey Clausen, Tennessee
 5. Matt Schaub, Virginia
- 2002 winner: Brad Banks, Iowa

DOAK WALKER AWARD

Running Back
GTE/SMU Athletic Forum, Dallas

1. Maurice Claret, Ohio State
 2. Frank Gore, Miami
 3. Kevin Jones, Virginia Tech
 4. Darren Sproles, Kansas State
 5. Bruce Perry, Maryland
- 2002 winner: Larry Johnson, Penn State

BILETNIKOFF AWARD

Wide Receiver
Quarterback Club of Tallahassee

1. Roy Williams, Texas
 2. Reggie Williams, Washington
 3. Rashaun Woods, Oklahoma State
 4. Larry Fitzgerald, Pittsburgh
 5. Mike Williams, USC
- 2002 winner: Charles Rogers, Michigan State

BUTKUS AWARD

Linebacker
Downtown Athletic Club of Orlando

1. Teddy Lehman, Oklahoma
 2. Jonathan Vilma, Miami
 3. Rod Davis, Southern Miss
 4. Courtney Watson, Notre Dame
 5. Karlos Dansby, Auburn
- 2002 winner: E.J. Henderson, Maryland

THORPE AWARD

Defensive Back
Athletic Club of Oklahoma City

1. Chris Gamble, CB, Ohio State
 2. Marlin Jackson, CB, Michigan
 3. Sean Taylor, S, Miami
 4. Derrick Strait, CB, Oklahoma
 5. Jim Leonhard, S, Wisconsin
- 2002 winner: Terence Newman, CB, Kansas State

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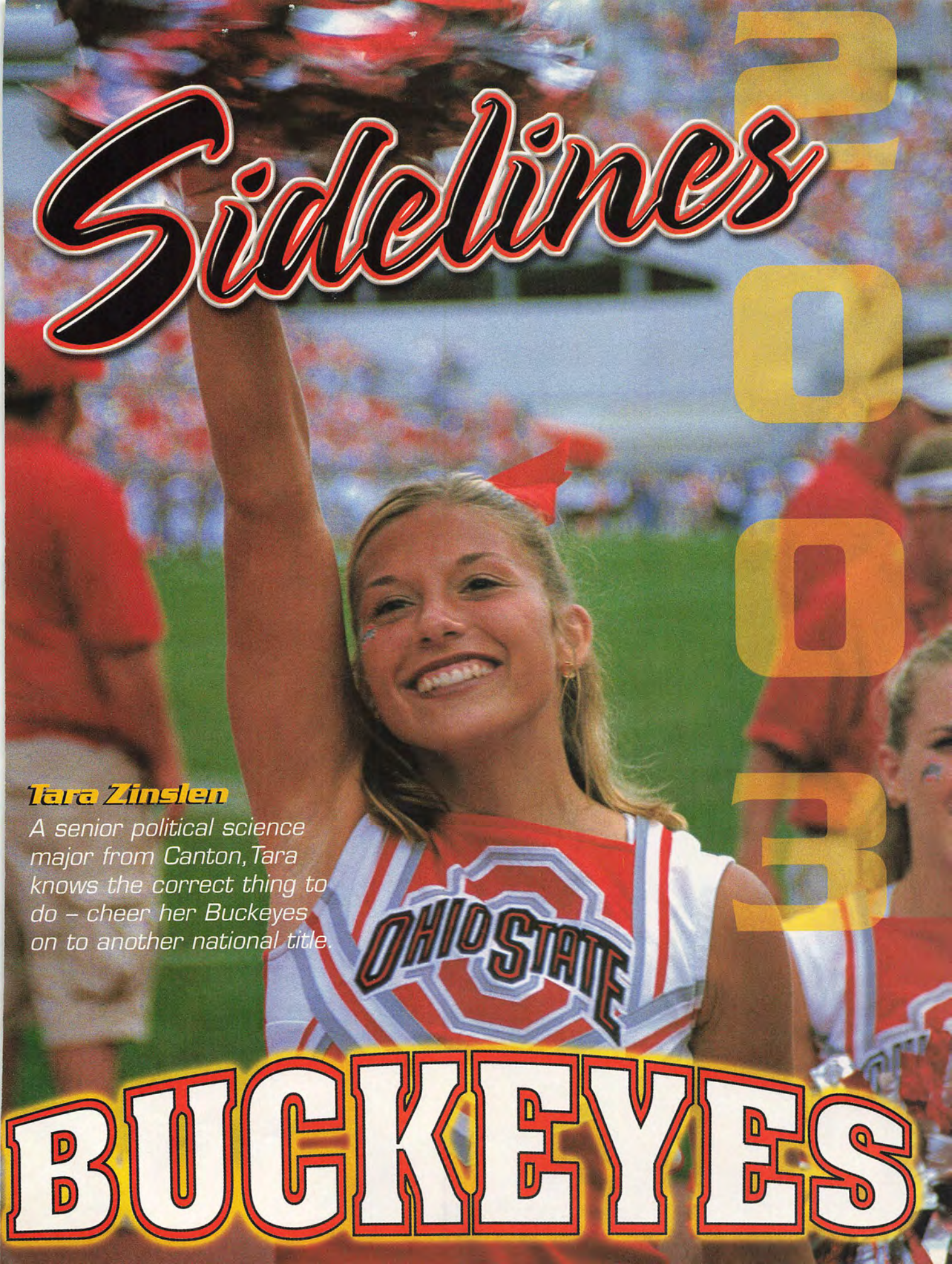
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Bowl Schedule: 2003-2004

New Orleans Bowl New Orleans (Superdome) Lindy's pick: North Texas vs. Tulane	Dec. 16, 7 p.m. Sun Belt #1 vs. C-USA #4	Sun Bowl El Paso, Texas (Sun Bowl) Lindy's pick: Iowa vs. Arizona State	Dec. 31, 2 p.m. Pac-10 #3 vs. Big Ten #5
GMAC Bowl Mobile, Ala. (Ladd Peebles Stadium) Lindy's pick: Central Florida vs. Southern Miss	Dec. 18, 8 p.m. MAC or WAC vs. C-USA #2	Liberty Bowl Memphis (Liberty) Lindy's pick: TCU vs. Colorado State	Dec. 31, 3:30 p.m. C-USA #1 vs. MWC #1
Tangerine Bowl Orlando (Citrus Bowl) Lindy's pick: Virginia vs. Nebraska	Dec. 22, 5:30 p.m. ACC vs. Big 12 #5-6	Music City Bowl Nashville (Adelphia Coliseum) Lindy's pick: South Carolina vs. Minnesota	Dec. 31, 4 p.m. SEC #6-8 vs. Big Ten #5
Fort Worth Bowl Dallas (Amon Carter Stadium) Lindy's pick: Texas Tech vs. Louisville	Dec. 23, 7:30 p.m. Big 12 #8 vs. C-USA #5	Independence Bowl Shreveport (Independence Bowl) Lindy's pick: Ole Miss vs. Missouri	Dec. 31, 7:30 p.m. SEC #6-8 vs. Big 12 #5-7
Las Vegas Bowl Las Vegas (Sam Boyd) Lindy's pick: Oregon State vs. Air Force	Dec. 24, 7:30 p.m. Pac-10 #5 vs. MWC #2	Humanitarian Bowl Boise, Idaho (Broncos Stadium) Lindy's pick: Boise State vs. BYU	Dec. 31, TBD WAC #1-2 vs. open
Hawaii Bowl Honolulu (Aloha) Lindy's pick: Cincinnati vs. Hawaii	Dec. 25, 8 p.m. C-USA #3 vs. WAC	Capital One Bowl Orlando (Citrus Bowl) Lindy's pick: Florida vs. Purdue	Jan. 1, 1 p.m. SEC #2 vs. Big Ten #2
Motor City Bowl Detroit (Ford Field) Lindy's pick: Marshall vs. Illinois	Dec. 26, 5 p.m. MAC #1-2 vs. open	Outback Bowl Tampa Bay (Raymond James) Lindy's pick: Wisconsin vs. Georgia	Jan. 1, 11 a.m. Big Ten #3 vs. SEC #3-5
Insight Bowl Phoenix (Bank One Ballpark) Lindy's pick: Notre Dame vs. UCLA	Dec. 26, 8:30 p.m. Big East #3 vs. Pac-10 #4	Gator Bowl Jacksonville, Fla. (Alltel Stadium) Lindy's pick: Florida State vs. Pittsburgh	Jan. 1, 12:30 p.m. ACC #2 vs. Big East #2
Continental Tire Bowl Charlotte, N.C. (Ericsson) Lindy's pick: Virginia Tech vs. Clemson	Dec. 27, TBD Big East vs. ACC	Peach Bowl Atlanta (Georgia Dome) Lindy's pick: LSU vs. North Carolina State	Jan. 1, 4:30 p.m. SEC #3-5 vs. ACC #3
Alamo Bowl San Antonio (Alamodome) Lindy's pick: Penn State vs. Texas A&M	Dec. 29, 9 p.m. Big Ten #4 vs. Big 12 #4	Rose Bowl Pasadena (Rose Bowl) Lindy's pick: USC vs. Ohio State	Jan. 1, 5 p.m. Pac-10 #1 vs. Big Ten #1
Houston Bowl Houston (Astrodome) Lindy's pick: Colorado vs. Arkansas	Dec. 30, 4:30 p.m. Big 12 #5-7 vs. SEC # 6-8	Orange Bowl Miami (Orange Bowl) Lindy's pick: Maryland vs. Auburn	Jan. 1, 8 p.m. ACC #1/Big East #1 vs. BCS
Silicon Valley Classic San Jose, Calif. (Spartan) Lindy's pick: Fresno State vs. Oregon	Dec. 30, 7:30 p.m. WAC #1-2 vs. Pac-10 # 6	Cotton Bowl Dallas (Cotton Bowl) Lindy's pick: Kansas State vs. Tennessee	Jan. 2, 2 p.m. Big 12 #2 vs. SEC #3-5
Holiday Bowl San Diego (Qualcomm) Lindy's pick: Washington vs. Oklahoma State	Dec. 30, 8 p.m. Pac-10 #2 vs. Big 12 #3	Fiesta Bowl Tempe, Ariz. (Sun Devil Stadium) Lindy's pick: Michigan vs. Texas	Jan. 2, 8 p.m. Big 12 #1 vs. at-large
San Francisco Bowl San Francisco (Pacific Bell Park) Lindy's pick: New Mexico vs. West Virginia	Dec. 31, 10:30 a.m. MWC #3 vs. Big East	Sugar Bowl New Orleans (Superdome) Lindy's pick: Oklahoma vs. Miami	Jan. 4, 8 p.m. BCS #1 vs. BCS #2

Notes: Notre Dame is included as part of the Big East bowl pool (other than the league's BCS spot). The SEC order of picks is arranged by geography and other factors, not strictly by order of finish in the league. Most bowls have options with conferences beyond strict order of standings. Bowl projections may differ from order of conference projections due to regional selections, bowls avoiding rematches and "trading" teams for better fits. All times ET.



Sidelines

2003

Tara Zinslen

A senior political science major from Canton, Tara knows the correct thing to do – cheer her Buckeyes on to another national title.

BUCKEYES

In the Grove

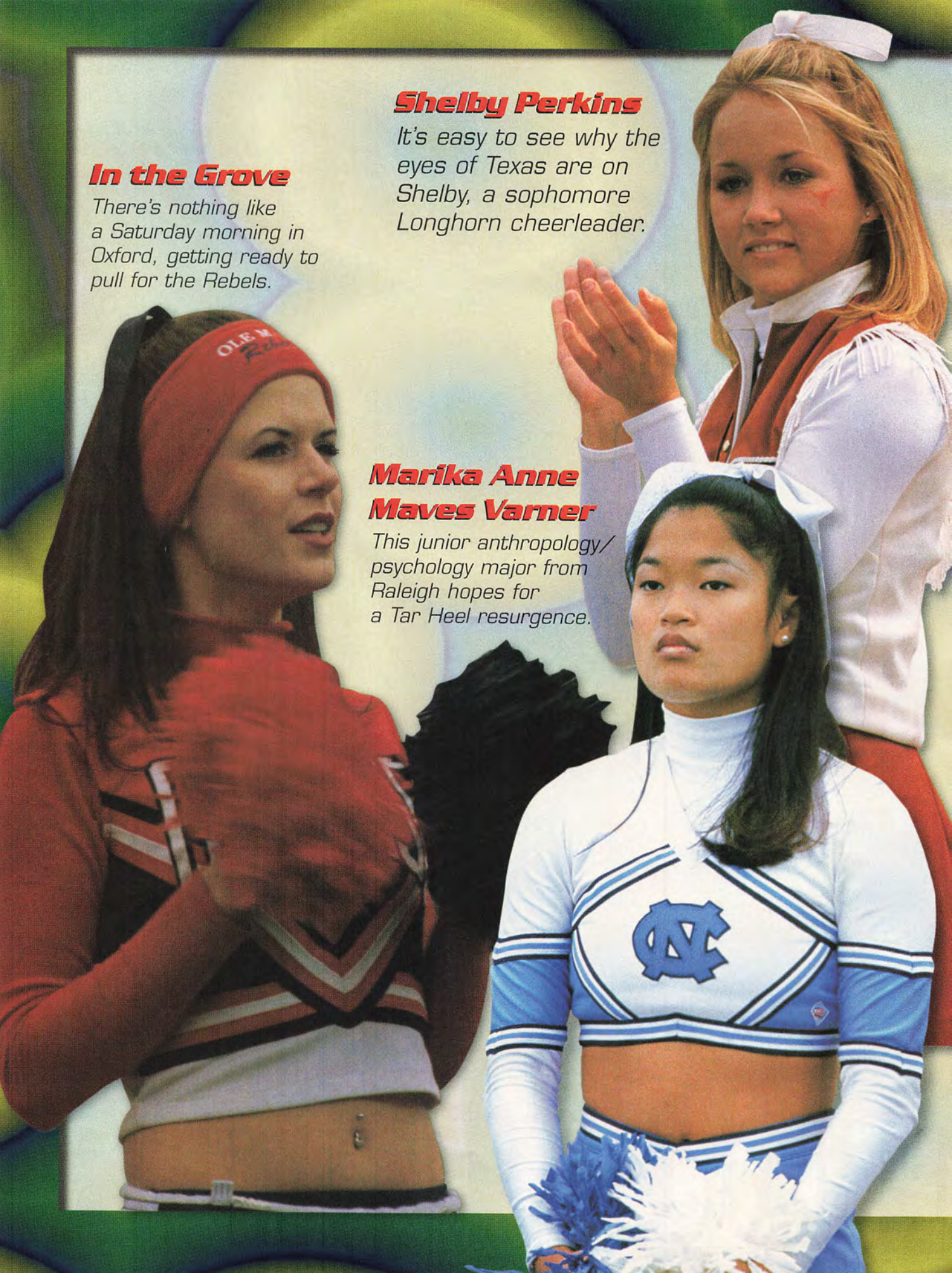
There's nothing like a Saturday morning in Oxford, getting ready to pull for the Rebels.

Shelby Perkins

It's easy to see why the eyes of Texas are on Shelby, a sophomore Longhorn cheerleader.

Marika Anne Maves Varner

This junior anthropology/psychology major from Raleigh hopes for a Tar Heel resurgence.

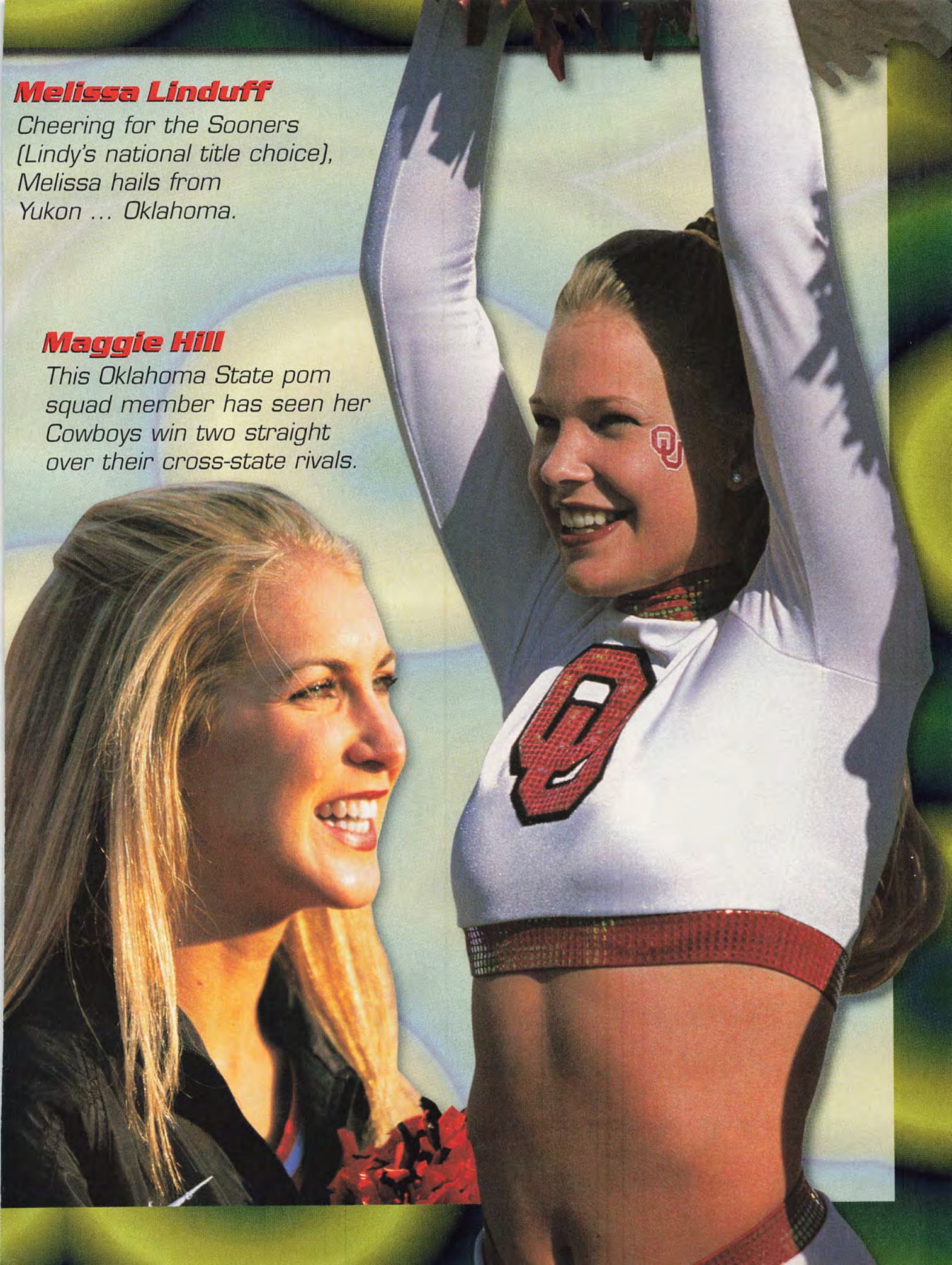


Melissa Linduff

*Cheering for the Sooners
(Lindy's national title choice),
Melissa hails from
Yukon ... Oklahoma.*

Maggie Hill

*This Oklahoma State pom
squad member has seen her
Cowboys win two straight
over their cross-state rivals.*



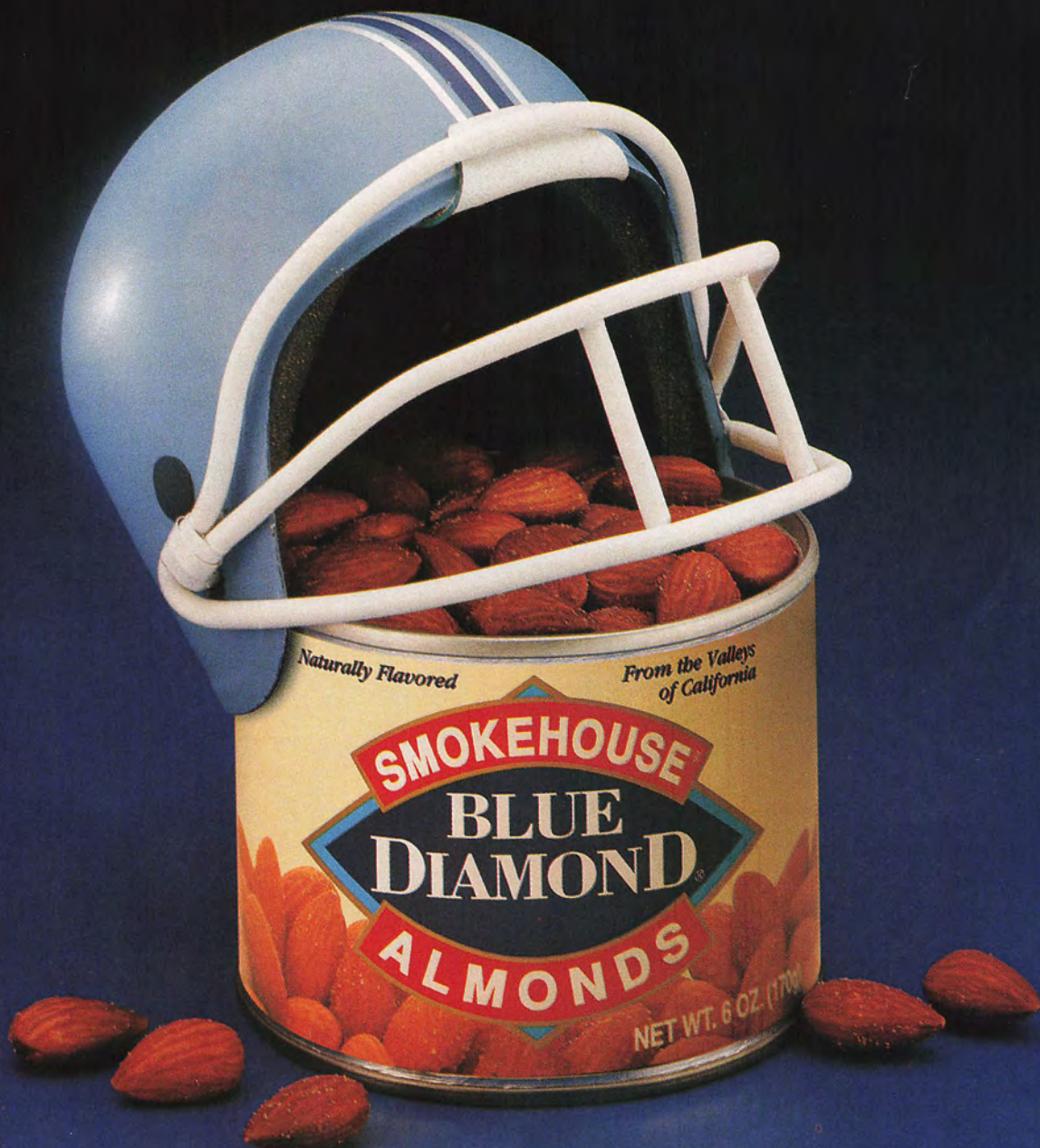
Kiirsten

This communications major is a southern California girl – hometown San Diego, home team UCLA.

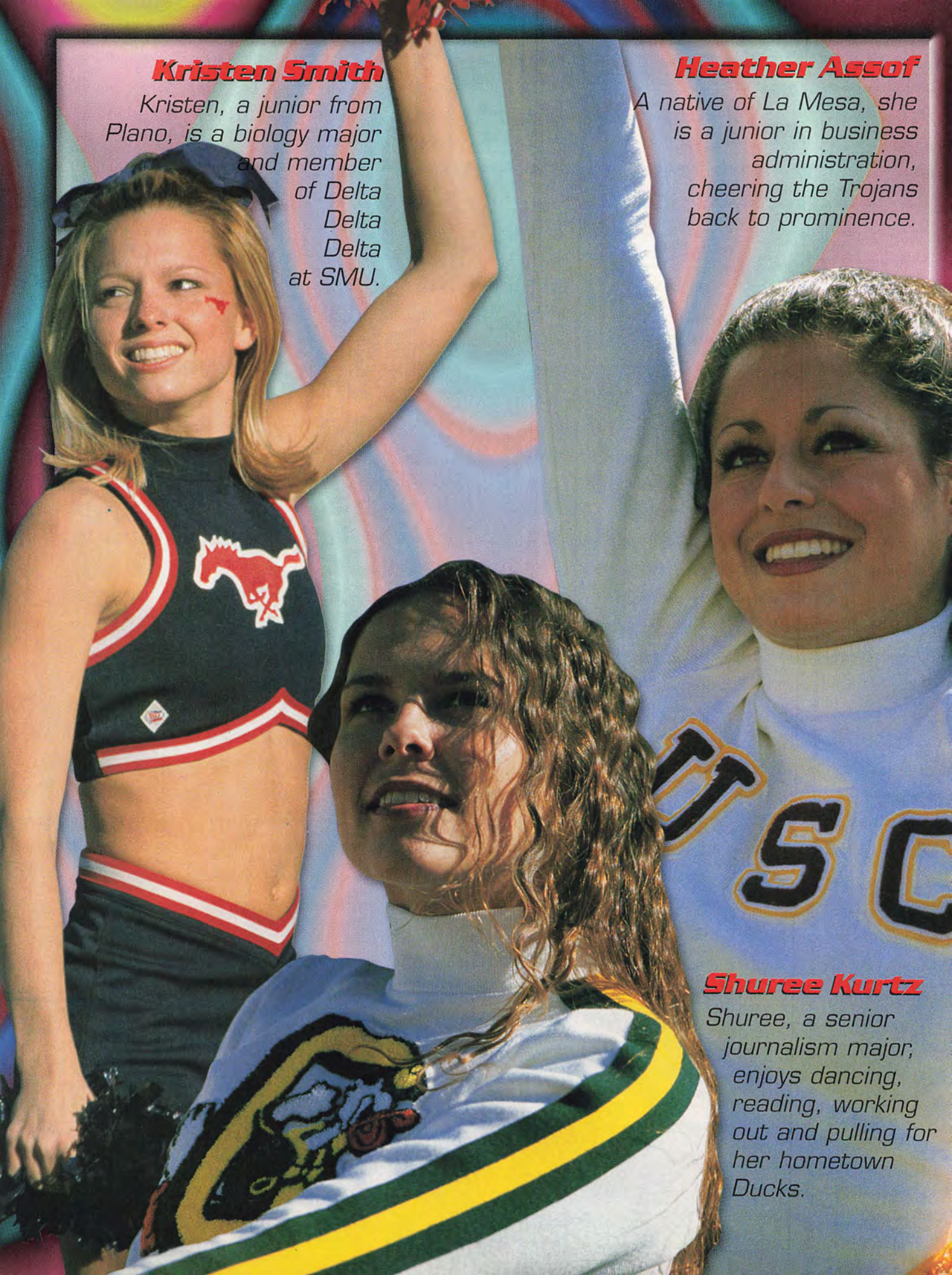
Jocelyn

A Peach State native, Jocelyn enjoys watching men's soccer ... and cheering for the Irish whatever the sport.

Football Nut



A can a week,[™] *Naturally!*

A photograph of three cheerleaders. On the left, a blonde cheerleader (Kristen Smith) is in a black and red Delta Delta Delta uniform, cheering with her right arm raised. In the center, a cheerleader with long brown hair (Shuree Kurtz) is in a white and green Delta Delta Delta uniform, looking upwards. On the right, a cheerleader with dark hair (Heather Assof) is in a white and blue Delta Delta Delta uniform, smiling. The background is a colorful, abstract pattern.

Kristen Smith

Kristen, a junior from Plano, is a biology major and member of Delta Delta Delta at SMU.

Heather Assof

A native of La Mesa, she is a junior in business administration, cheering the Trojans back to prominence.

Shuree Kurtz

Shuree, a senior journalism major, enjoys dancing, reading, working out and pulling for her hometown Ducks.

5

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Auburn University

Lyndsey Jolly

A junior marketing major, this Tiger cheerleader enjoys hiking, skiing and cooking.

Lisl Duncan

Lisl, a native of Moraga, CA, is an English major who is into singing, reading and working with kids.

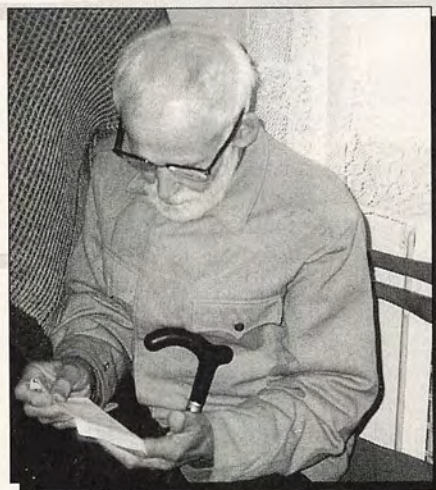
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Keeping the Faith

BY BILL SORRELL

Her name was Sunset.

Many would come to think that the sun rose on her son. Mark Richt, University of Georgia football coach, would be among them.

When Sunset Cleckler Bowden gave birth to her son, Robert Cleckler Bowden, she named him for her father.

The name of Bobby Bowden has become synonymous with college football.

Bowden, Florida State football coach, is second on the list of all-time winning NCAA Division I-A coaches with 332 victories.

It was at Florida State that Richt, the 2002 Southeastern Conference Coach of the Year after leading the Bulldogs to their first SEC championship in 20 years, got to know Bowden.

Richt was on his way to LSU when

Bowden offered him a job as a graduate assistant in 1985. "That was a big turning point for me," said Richt, 43.

Facing the death of a player, Richt made a decision about life.

The Florida State team huddled together in 1986 as Bowden told them the tragic news that a player, Pablo Lopez, had been shot and killed.

"Now he's gone. I don't know where he is going to spend eternity," said Bowden, who asked a question that Richt had to think hard to answer.

"If that had been you, do you know where you would spend eternity?" Bowden asked.

Standing in the back of the room, Richt said to himself, "I didn't know. I didn't know if I had come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. I didn't like to think of where I might be going."

The next morning Richt went to Bowden's office. There Bowden led Richt to the Lord as he prayed for Christ to become his savior. Richt was 26.

"That's one of the best things that happen in life," said Bowden, who became a Christian when he was 10. "I knew God worked through me to make it happen. That is what life is all about for me."

At the University of Miami where he was a back-up quarterback to Buffalo Bills star Jim Kelly, Richt had thought about making a decision for Christ.

"Seeds had been planted," said Richt. He watched a teammate, defensive back John Peasley, have a "miraculous change" of life for Christ.

"I was attracted to what was happening in his life," said Richt. "But I wasn't man enough to make that decision at that time."

Richt was worried about what his friends or his girlfriend back home in Boca Raton might think. "I thought I had to be perfect if I was a Christian. I didn't want to be a hypocrite."

He was also afraid that God may want him to do something besides be a "superstar quarterback." He might send him as a missionary in a foreign country.

"The main focus of my life was me. I was very self-centered. In all my thinking pattern, I was very concerned about me; my career, my life. After I became a Christian, I became more Christ-centered. I was more apt to think about others."

Bowden noticed the change. "It was very evident by the way he lived his life. He changed his priorities in life because all of a sudden Jesus was his No. 1 priority."

For Richt, "Christ is everything," he said.

Georgia tight end Ben Watson, a senior from Rock Hill, S.C., said that his faith has been strengthened by being around Richt and assistant coaches Dave Van Halanger and David Johnson.

"Knowing that we have a head coach who loves the Lord, there is freedom for people to witness for Christ. Deep down he cares about his players and he cares more about who we are spiritually than who we are as football players," said Watson, a pastor's son.

Team chaplain, Kevin Hynes, Richt's brother-in-law, leads prayer for Georgia and opponents after games. The Bulldogs also pray in the locker room, thanking God for safety or victory or defeat said Watson.

Watson and Richt share a Bible verse that is significant to both, Colossians 3:23-24, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for men. Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward."

Rewards have come from hard work. It was through hard work and the "grace of God" that Georgia won the SEC said Watson. "He (Richt) taught us to work hard. That's the bottom line."

Said Richt, "I want a team that believes it can win every game they play and play as hard as they can for 60 minutes. I want a unified team, a team that reaches its full potential whatever that may be in any given year.

"The bottom line is I want them to be better when they leave here than when they got here. I want them to get their degree, to be prepared to be a good husband, a good father, a good employee and a good citizen of this country."

Richt's mission statement doesn't mention winning and losing. He wants his coaches to handle responsibilities with "excellence" and to be dedicated in "assisting our players to reach their full potential, in the classroom, on the football field, and in society."

Richt, who is reading the Bible through again and attends Prince Avenue Baptist Church in Athens, wants his wife, Katharyn, and their four children, to know where his strength comes from.

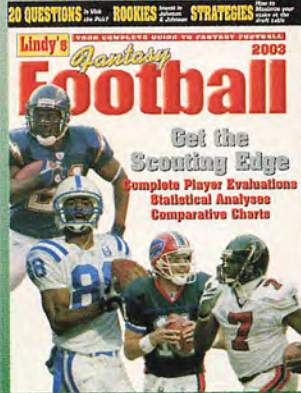
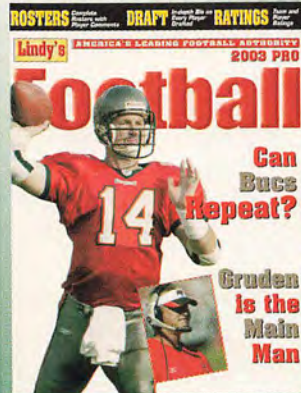
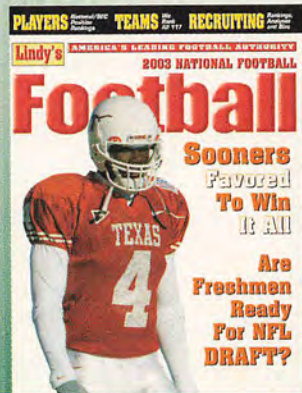
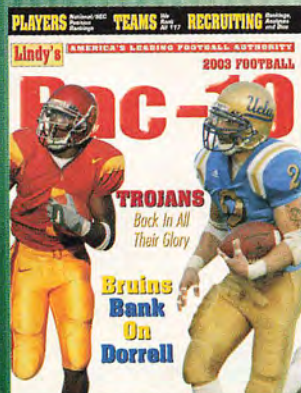
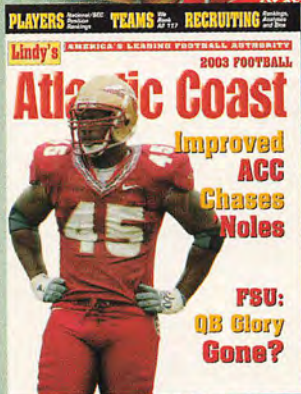
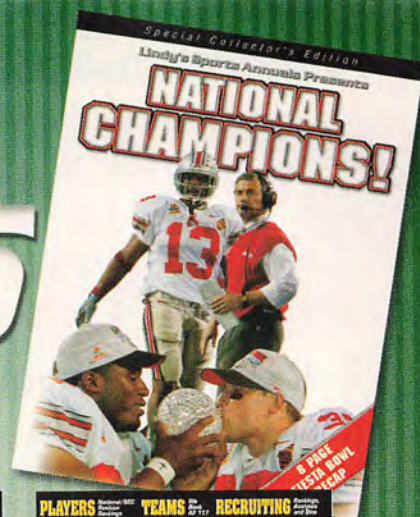
"I want them to know Christ is at the center of every decision I make. My goal is to live a life that is well pleasing to Christ above all else," he said. ■



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CLEMSON

Aug. 30 GEORGIA
Sept. 6 FURMAN
Sept. 13 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Sept. 20 at Georgia Tech
Oct. 4 at Maryland
Oct. 11 VIRGINIA
Oct. 18 at North Carolina State
Oct. 25 NORTH CAROLINA
Nov. 1 at Wake Forest
Nov. 8 FLORIDA STATE
Nov. 15 DUKE
Nov. 22 at SOUTH CAROLINA

DUKE

Aug. 30 at Virginia
Sept. 6 WESTERN CAROLINA
Sept. 13 RICE
Sept. 20 NORTHWESTERN
Sept. 27 FLORIDA STATE
Oct. 4 at Maryland
Oct. 11 WAKE FOREST
Oct. 18 NORTH CAROLINA STATE
Oct. 25 at Tennessee
Nov. 1 GEORGIA TECH
Nov. 8 at Clemson
Nov. 15 at Clemson
Nov. 22 at North Carolina

FLORIDA STATE

Aug. 30 at North Carolina
Sept. 6 MARYLAND
Sept. 13 GEORGIA TECH
Sept. 20 COLORADO
Sept. 27 at Duke
Oct. 4 MIAMI (FL)
Oct. 11 at Virginia
Oct. 18 WAKE FOREST
Oct. 25 at Notre Dame
Nov. 1 at Clemson
Nov. 8 NORTH CAROLINA STATE
Nov. 15 at Florida

GEORGIA TECH

Aug. 28 at Brigham Young (Thur.)
Sept. 6 AUBURN
Sept. 13 at Florida State
Sept. 20 CLEMSON
Sept. 27 at Vanderbilt
Oct. 4 NORTH CAROLINA STATE
Oct. 11 at Wake Forest
Oct. 18 MARYLAND (Thur.)
Oct. 25 at Duke
Nov. 1 NORTH CAROLINA
Nov. 8 at Virginia
Nov. 15 GEORGIA

MARYLAND

Aug. 28 at Northern Illinois (Thur.)
Sept. 6 at Florida State
Sept. 13 THE CITADEL
Sept. 20 WEST VIRGINIA
Sept. 27 at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 4 CLEMSON
Oct. 11 DUKE
Oct. 18 at Georgia Tech (Thur.)
Oct. 25 NORTH CAROLINA
Nov. 1 VIRGINIA (Thur.)
Nov. 8 at North Carolina State
Nov. 15 at Wake Forest

NORTH CAROLINA

Aug. 30 FLORIDA STATE
Sept. 6 SYRACUSE
Sept. 20 at Wisconsin
Sept. 27 at North Carolina State
Oct. 4 VIRGINIA
Oct. 11 at East Carolina
Oct. 18 ARIZONA STATE
Oct. 25 at Clemson
Nov. 1 at Maryland
Nov. 8 WAKE FOREST
Nov. 15 at Georgia Tech
Nov. 22 DUKE

NORTH CAROLINA STATE

Aug. 30 WESTERN CAROLINA
Sept. 6 at Ohio State
Sept. 13 TEXAS TECH
Sept. 20 NORTH CAROLINA
Oct. 4 at Georgia Tech
Oct. 11 CONNECTICUT
Oct. 18 CLEMSON
Oct. 25 at Duke
Nov. 1 VIRGINIA

Nov. 15 at Florida State
Nov. 22 MARYLAND

VIRGINIA

Aug. 30 DUKE
Sept. 6 at South Carolina
Sept. 13 at Western Michigan
Sept. 20 WAKE FOREST
Oct. 4 at North Carolina
Oct. 11 at Clemson
Oct. 18 FLORIDA STATE
Oct. 25 TROY STATE
Nov. 1 at North Carolina State
Nov. 8 at Maryland (Thur.)
Nov. 15 GEORGIA TECH
Nov. 22 VIRGINIA TECH

WAKE FOREST

Aug. 30 at Boston College
Sept. 6 NORTH CAROLINA STATE
Sept. 13 PURDUE
Sept. 20 EAST CAROLINA
Sept. 27 at Virginia
Oct. 4 GEORGIA TECH
Oct. 11 at Duke
Oct. 18 at Florida State
Oct. 25 CLEMSON
Nov. 1 at North Carolina
Nov. 8 CONNECTICUT
Nov. 15 MARYLAND

BIG EAST

BOSTON COLLEGE

Aug. 30 WAKE FOREST
Sept. 6 at Penn State
Sept. 13 at Connecticut
Sept. 20 MIAMI (FL)
Sept. 27 BALL STATE
Oct. 4 at Temple
Oct. 11 at Syracuse
Oct. 18 NOTRE DAME
Oct. 25 PITTSBURGH
Nov. 1 WEST VIRGINIA
Nov. 8 at Rutgers
Nov. 15 at Rutgers
Nov. 22 at Virginia Tech

MIAMI

Aug. 30 at La. Tech @ Shreveport, La.
Sept. 6 FLORIDA
Sept. 13 EAST CAROLINA
Sept. 20 at Boston College
Oct. 2 WEST VIRGINIA
Oct. 11 at Florida State
Oct. 18 TEMPLE
Nov. 1 at Virginia Tech
Nov. 8 TENNESSEE
Nov. 15 SYRACUSE
Nov. 22 RUTGERS
Nov. 29 at Pittsburgh

PITTSBURGH

Sept. 6 KENT STATE
Sept. 13 BALL STATE
Sept. 20 at Toledo
Sept. 27 at Texas A&M
Oct. 4 NOTRE DAME
Oct. 11 at Rutgers
Oct. 18 SYRACUSE
Oct. 25 at Boston College
Nov. 1 VIRGINIA TECH
Nov. 8 at West Virginia
Nov. 15 at Temple
Nov. 22 MIAMI (FL)

RUTGERS

Aug. 30 BUFFALO
Sept. 6 at Michigan State
Sept. 13 at Army
Sept. 20 NAVY
Oct. 4 VIRGINIA TECH
Oct. 11 at West Virginia
Oct. 18 PITTSBURGH
Oct. 25 at Temple
Nov. 1 at Connecticut
Nov. 8 BOSTON COLLEGE
Nov. 15 at Miami (FL)
Nov. 22 SYRACUSE

SYRACUSE

Sept. 6 at North Carolina
Sept. 13 LOUISVILLE
Sept. 20 UCF
Sept. 27 TOLEDO
Oct. 4 at Virginia Tech
Oct. 11 BOSTON COLLEGE
Oct. 18 at Pittsburgh

Nov. 8 TEMPLE
Nov. 15 at Miami (FL)
Nov. 22 WEST VIRGINIA
Nov. 29 at Rutgers
Dec. 6 NOTRE DAME

TEMPLE

Aug. 30 at Penn State
Sept. 6 VILLANOVA
Sept. 13 at Cincinnati
Sept. 20 WAKE FOREST
Oct. 4 at Middle Tennessee
Oct. 11 BOSTON COLLEGE
Oct. 18 at Miami (FL)
Oct. 25 RUTGERS
Nov. 8 at Syracuse
Nov. 15 VIRGINIA TECH
Nov. 22 PITTSBURGH
Nov. 29 at West Virginia

VIRGINIA TECH

Aug. 31 UCF (Sun.)
Sept. 6 JAMES MADISON
Sept. 13 TEXAS A&M (Thur.)
Sept. 20 CONNECTICUT
Oct. 4 at Rutgers
Oct. 11 SYRACUSE
Oct. 18 at West Virginia (Wed.)
Nov. 1 MIAMI (FL)
Nov. 8 at Pittsburgh
Nov. 15 at Temple
Nov. 22 BOSTON COLLEGE
Nov. 29 at Virginia

WEST VIRGINIA

Aug. 30 WISCONSIN
Sept. 6 at East Carolina
Sept. 13 CINCINNATI
Sept. 20 at Maryland
Oct. 4 at Michigan (FL)
Oct. 11 RUTGERS
Oct. 18 VIRGINIA TECH
Oct. 25 UCF
Nov. 1 at Boston College
Nov. 8 PITTSBURGH
Nov. 15 at Syracuse
Nov. 22 TEMPLE

BIG TEN

ILLINOIS

Aug. 30 Missouri @ St. Louis, MO
Sept. 6 ILLINOIS STATE
Sept. 13 at UCLA
Sept. 20 CALIFORNIA
Sept. 27 WISCONSIN
Oct. 4 at Purdue
Oct. 11 MICHIGAN STATE
Oct. 18 at Michigan
Oct. 25 MINNESOTA
Nov. 1 at Iowa
Nov. 8 at Indiana
Nov. 15 NORTHWESTERN

INDIANA

Aug. 30 at Connecticut
Sept. 6 at Washington
Sept. 13 INDIANA STATE
Sept. 20 KENTUCKY
Sept. 27 at Michigan
Oct. 4 at Michigan State
Oct. 11 NORTHWESTERN
Oct. 18 OHIO STATE
Oct. 25 at Minnesota
Nov. 1 ILLINOIS
Nov. 8 at Penn State
Nov. 15 PURDUE

IOWA

Aug. 30 MIAMI (OH)
Sept. 6 BUFFALO
Sept. 13 at Iowa State
Sept. 20 ARIZONA STATE
Sept. 27 at Michigan State
Oct. 4 MICHIGAN
Oct. 11 at Ohio State
Oct. 18 PENN STATE
Oct. 25 ILLINOIS
Nov. 1 at Purdue
Nov. 8 MINNESOTA
Nov. 15 at Wisconsin

MICHIGAN

Aug. 30 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Sept. 6 HOUSTON
Sept. 13 NOTRE DAME
Sept. 20 at Oregon
Sept. 27 INDIANA
Oct. 4 at Iowa
Oct. 11 at Minnesota
Oct. 18 ILLINOIS
Oct. 25 PURDUE
Nov. 1 at Michigan State
Nov. 8 at Northwestern
Nov. 15 OHIO STATE

MICHIGAN STATE

Aug. 30 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Sept. 6 RUTGERS
Sept. 13 LOUISIANA TECH
Sept. 20 at Notre Dame
Sept. 27 IOWA
Oct. 4 INDIANA
Oct. 11 at Illinois
Oct. 18 at Minnesota
Nov. 1 MICHIGAN
Nov. 8 at Ohio State
Nov. 15 at Wisconsin
Nov. 22 PENN STATE

MINNESOTA

Aug. 30 TULSA
Sept. 6 TROY STATE
Sept. 13 at Ohio
Sept. 20 LOUISIANA-LAFAYETTE
Sept. 27 at Penn State
Oct. 4 at Northwestern
Oct. 11 MICHIGAN
Oct. 18 MICHIGAN STATE
Oct. 25 at Illinois
Nov. 1 INDIANA
Nov. 8 WISCONSIN
Nov. 15 at Iowa

NORTHWESTERN

Aug. 30 at Kansas
Sept. 6 AIR FORCE
Sept. 13 MIAMI (OH)
Sept. 20 at Duke
Sept. 27 at Ohio State
Oct. 4 MINNESOTA
Oct. 11 at Indiana
Oct. 18 WISCONSIN
Nov. 1 at Purdue
Nov. 8 PENN STATE
Nov. 15 MICHIGAN
Nov. 22 at Illinois

OHIO STATE

Aug. 30 WASHINGTON
Sept. 6 SAN DIEGO STATE
Sept. 13 NORTH CAROLINA STATE
Sept. 20 BOWLING GREEN
Sept. 27 NORTHWESTERN
Oct. 4 at Wisconsin
Oct. 11 IOWA
Oct. 18 at Indiana
Oct. 25 at Penn State
Nov. 1 MICHIGAN STATE
Nov. 8 PURDUE
Nov. 15 at Michigan

PENN STATE

Aug. 30 TEMPLE
Sept. 6 BOSTON COLLEGE
Sept. 13 at Nebraska
Sept. 20 KENT STATE
Sept. 27 MINNESOTA
Oct. 4 WISCONSIN
Oct. 11 at Purdue
Oct. 18 at Iowa
Oct. 25 OHIO STATE
Nov. 1 at Northwestern
Nov. 8 INDIANA
Nov. 15 at Michigan State

PURDUE

Sept. 6 BOWLING GREEN
Sept. 13 at Wake Forest
Sept. 20 ARIZONA
Sept. 27 NOTRE DAME
Oct. 4 ILLINOIS
Oct. 11 PENN STATE
Oct. 18 at Wisconsin
Oct. 25 at Michigan
Nov. 1 NORTHWESTERN
Nov. 8 IOWA
Nov. 15 at Ohio State
Nov. 22 at Indiana

WISCONSIN

Aug. 30 at West Virginia
Sept. 6 AKRON
Sept. 13 UNIV
Sept. 20 NORTH CAROLINA
Sept. 27 at Illinois
Oct. 4 at Penn State
Oct. 11 OHIO STATE
Oct. 18 PURDUE
Oct. 25 at Northwestern
Nov. 8 at Minnesota
Nov. 15 MICHIGAN STATE
Nov. 22 IOWA

BIG 12

BAYLOR

Aug. 30 UAB
Sept. 6 at North Texas
Sept. 13 SMU
Sept. 20 SAM HOUSTON STATE
Oct. 4 COLORADO
Oct. 11 at Texas A&M
Oct. 18 at Kansas
Oct. 25 TEXAS
Nov. 1 at Kansas State
Nov. 8 TEXAS TECH
Nov. 15 at Oklahoma
Nov. 22 OKLAHOMA STATE

COLORADO

Aug. 30 Colorado State @ Denver, CO
Sept. 6 UCLA
Sept. 13 WASHINGTON STATE
Sept. 20 at Florida State
Oct. 4 at Baylor
Oct. 11 KANSAS
Oct. 18 at Kansas State
Oct. 25 OKLAHOMA
Nov. 1 at Texas Tech
Nov. 8 MISSOURI
Nov. 15 at Iowa State
Nov. 22 NEBRASKA (Fri.)

IOWA STATE

Aug. 30 NORTHERN IOWA
Sept. 6 OHIO
Sept. 13 IOWA
Sept. 27 at Northern Illinois

Oct. 4 OKLAHOMA
Oct. 11 at Texas Tech
Oct. 18 TEXAS
Oct. 25 at Nebraska
Nov. 1 at Missouri
Nov. 8 KANSAS STATE
Nov. 15 COLORADO
Nov. 22 at Kansas

KANSAS

Aug. 30 NORTHWESTERN
Sept. 6 UNIV
Sept. 13 at Wyoming
Sept. 20 JACKSONVILLE STATE
Oct. 4 MISSOURI
Oct. 11 at Colorado
Oct. 18 BAYLOR
Oct. 25 at Kansas State
Nov. 1 at Texas A&M
Nov. 8 NEBRASKA
Nov. 15 at Oklahoma State
Nov. 22 IOWA STATE

KANSAS STATE

Aug. 23 California @ Kansas City
Aug. 30 TROY STATE
Sept. 6 MCNEESE STATE
Sept. 13 MASSACHUSETTS
Sept. 20 MARSHALL
Oct. 4 at Texas
Oct. 11 at Oklahoma State
Oct. 18 COLORADO
Oct. 25 KANSAS
Nov. 1 BAYLOR
Nov. 8 at Iowa State
Nov. 15 at Nebraska
Nov. 22 MISSOURI

MISSOURI

Aug. 30 Illinois @ St. Louis, MO
Sept. 6 at Ball State
Sept. 13 WESTERN KENTUCKY
Sept. 20 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Oct. 4 at Kansas
Oct. 11 NEBRASKA
Oct. 18 at Oklahoma
Oct. 25 TEXAS TECH
Nov. 1 IOWA STATE
Nov. 8 at Colorado
Nov. 15 TEXAS A&M
Nov. 22 at Kansas State

NEBRASKA

Aug. 30 OKLAHOMA STATE
Sept. 6 UTAH STATE
Sept. 13 PENN STATE
Sept. 20 at Southern Miss (Thur.)
Oct. 4 TROY STATE
Oct. 11 at Missouri
Oct. 18 TEXAS A&M
Oct. 25 IOWA STATE
Nov. 1 at Texas
Nov. 8 at Kansas
Nov. 15 KANSAS STATE
Nov. 22 at Colorado (Fri.)

OKLAHOMA

Aug. 30 NORTH TEXAS
Sept. 6 at Alabama
Sept. 13 FRESNO STATE
Sept. 20 UCLA
Oct. 4 at Iowa State
Oct. 11 Texas @ Dallas, TX
Oct. 18 MISSOURI
Oct. 25 at Colorado
Nov. 1 OKLAHOMA STATE
Nov. 8 TEXAS A&M
Nov. 15 BAYLOR
Nov. 22 at Texas Tech

OKLAHOMA STATE

Aug. 30 at Nebraska
Sept. 6 WYOMING
Sept. 13 SW MISSOURI STATE
Sept. 20 at SMU
Oct. 4 LOUISIANA-LAFAYETTE
Oct. 11 KANSAS STATE
Oct. 18 TEXAS TECH
Oct. 25 at Texas A&M
Nov. 1 at Oklahoma
Nov. 8 TEXAS
Nov. 15 KANSAS
Nov. 22 at Baylor

TEXAS

Aug. 30 NEW MEXICO STATE
Sept. 6 ARKANSAS
Sept. 13 at Rice
Sept. 20 TULANE
Sept. 27 KANSAS STATE
Oct. 4 Oklahoma @ Dallas, TX
Oct. 11 at Iowa State
Oct. 18 at Baylor
Oct. 25 NEBRASKA
Nov. 1 at Oklahoma State
Nov. 8 TEXAS TECH
Nov. 15 at Texas A&M (Fri.)

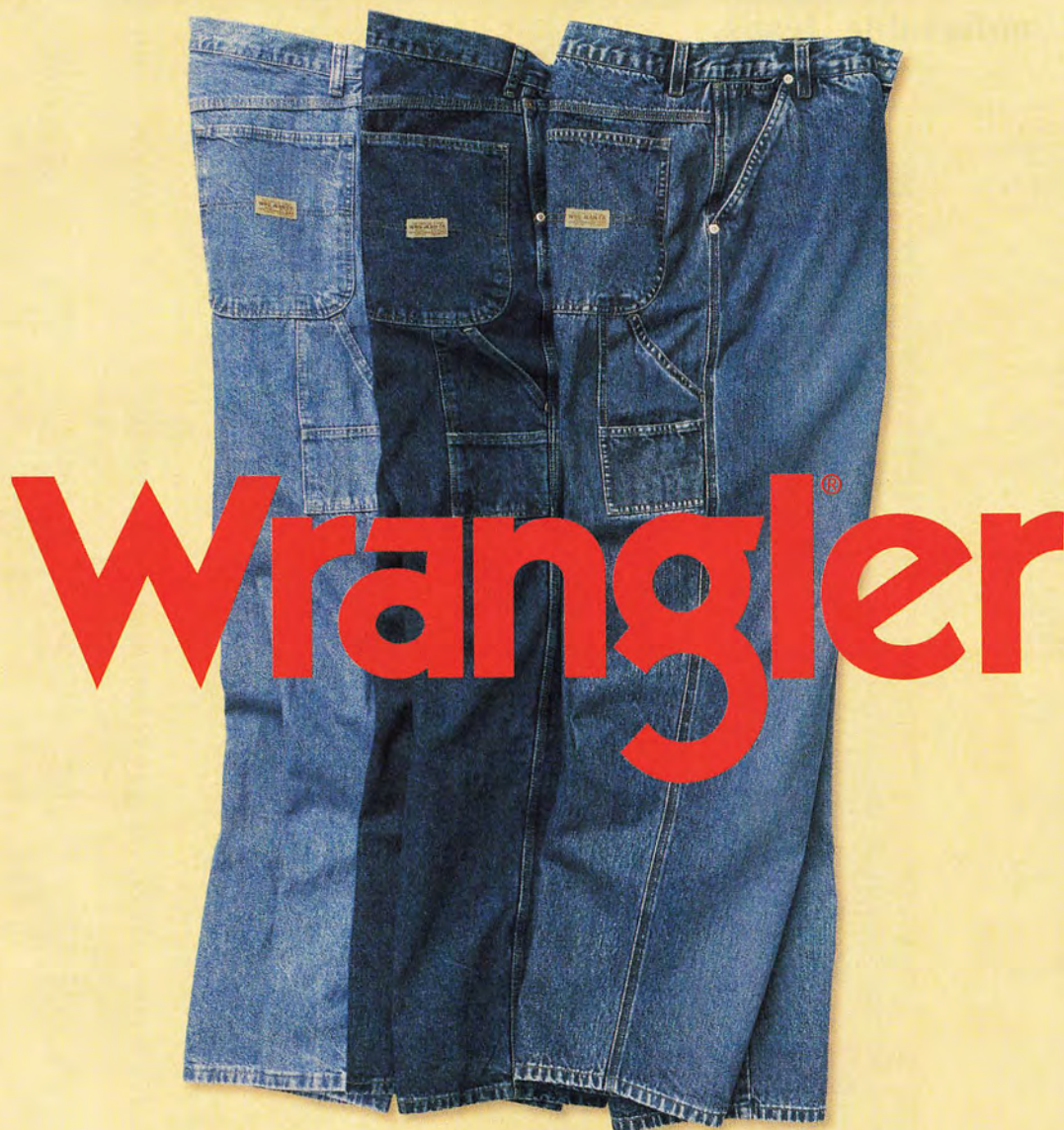
TEXAS A&M

Aug. 30 ARKANSAS STATE
Sept. 6 UTAH
Sept. 13 at Virginia Tech (Thur.)
Sept. 20 PITTSBURGH
Oct. 4 at Texas Tech
Oct. 11 BAYLOR
Oct. 18 at Nebraska
Oct. 25 OKLAHOMA STATE
Nov. 1 KANSAS
Nov. 8 at Oklahoma
Nov. 15 at Missouri
Nov. 22 TEXAS (Fri.)

TEXAS TECH

Aug. 30 SMU

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Sept. 6 NEW MEXICO
Sept. 20 at North Carolina State
Sept. 27 at Mississippi
Oct. 4 TEXAS A&M
Oct. 11 IOWA STATE
Oct. 18 at Oklahoma State
Oct. 25 at Missouri
Nov. 1 COLORADO
Nov. 8 at Baylor
Nov. 15 at Texas
Nov. 22 OKLAHOMA

C-USA

ARMY
Sept. 6 CONNECTICUT
Sept. 13 RUTGERS
Sept. 20 TULANE
Sept. 27 SOUTH FLORIDA
Oct. 4 at TCU
Oct. 11 at Louisville
Oct. 18 EAST CAROLINA
Oct. 25 at Cincinnati
Nov. 1 at UAB
Nov. 8 at Air Force
Nov. 15 HOUSTON
Nov. 22 at Hawaii
Dec. 6 vs. Navy @ Philadelphia, PA

CINCINNATI

Sept. 1 EAST CAROLINA (Mon.)
Sept. 13 at West Virginia
Sept. 20 TEMPLE
Sept. 27 at Miami (OH)
Oct. 4 SOUTHERN MISS
Oct. 11 at UAB
Oct. 25 ARMY
Nov. 1 at South Florida
Nov. 8 RHODE ISLAND
Nov. 15 at TCU
Nov. 22 at Memphis
Nov. 29 LOUISVILLE

EAST CAROLINA

Sept. 1 at Cincinnati (Mon.)
Sept. 6 WEST VIRGINIA
Sept. 13 at Miami (Fl.)
Sept. 20 at Wake Forest
Sept. 27 HOUSTON (Tue.)
Oct. 11 NORTH CAROLINA
Oct. 18 at Army
Oct. 25 LOUISVILLE
Nov. 1 at Memphis
Nov. 8 SOUTH FLORIDA
Nov. 22 at Tulane
Nov. 29 SOUTHERN MISS

HOUSTON

Aug. 30 RICE
Sept. 6 at Michigan
Sept. 14 at Louisiana-Lafayette
Sept. 20 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Sept. 27 at East Carolina (Tue.)
Oct. 11 at Tulane
Oct. 18 MEMPHIS
Oct. 25 TCU
Nov. 8 SOUTHERN MISS
Nov. 15 at Army
Nov. 22 at Louisville
Nov. 29 UAB

LOUISVILLE

Aug. 31 at Kentucky
Sept. 13 at Syracuse
Sept. 20 UTEP
Sept. 27 TEMPLE
Oct. 4 at South (Fl.)orida
Oct. 11 ARMY
Oct. 18 TULANE
Oct. 25 at East Carolina
Nov. 8 at TCU
Nov. 15 MEMPHIS
Nov. 22 HOUSTON
Nov. 29 at Cincinnati

MEMPHIS

Aug. 30 TENNESSEE TECH
Sept. 6 MISSISSIPPI
Sept. 13 at Southern Miss
Sept. 27 ARKANSAS STATE
Oct. 4 UAB
Oct. 11 at Mississippi State
Oct. 18 at Houston

Oct. 25 at Tulane
Nov. 1 EAST CAROLINA
Nov. 15 at Louisville
Nov. 22 CINCINNATI
Nov. 29 SOUTH FLORIDA

SOUTHERN MISS

Aug. 30 at California
Sept. 4 UAB
Sept. 13 MEMPHIS
Sept. 25 NEBRASKA (Thur.)
Oct. 4 at Cincinnati
Oct. 11 at Alabama
Oct. 25 SOUTH FLORIDA
Nov. 1 LOUISIANA-LAFAYETTE
Nov. 8 at Houston
Nov. 15 TULANE
Nov. 20 TCU
Nov. 29 at East Carolina

TCU

Sept. 1 at Tulane (Mon.)
Sept. 6 NAVY
Sept. 20 VANDERBILT
Sept. 27 at Arizona
Oct. 4 ARMY
Oct. 10 at South Florida (Fri.)
Oct. 18 UAB
Oct. 25 at Houston
Nov. 8 LOUISVILLE
Nov. 15 CINCINNATI
Nov. 20 at Southern Miss (Thur.)
Nov. 29 at SMU

TULANE

Sept. 1 TCU (Mon.)
Sept. 6 NORTHWESTERN STATE
Sept. 13 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Sept. 20 at Army
Sept. 27 at Texas
Oct. 11 HOUSTON
Oct. 18 at Louisville
Oct. 25 MEMPHIS
Nov. 1 at Navy
Nov. 8 at UAB
Nov. 15 at Southern Miss
Nov. 22 EAST CAROLINA

UAB

Aug. 30 at Baylor
Sept. 5 SOUTHERN MISS (Thur.)
Sept. 13 TROY STATE
Sept. 20 at South Carolina
Oct. 4 at Memphis
Oct. 11 CINCINNATI
Oct. 18 at TCU
Oct. 25 at Georgia
Nov. 1 ARMY
Nov. 8 TULANE
Nov. 22 at South Florida
Nov. 29 at Houston

INDEPENDENTS

CONNECTICUT

Aug. 30 INDIANA
Sept. 6 at Army
Sept. 13 BOSTON COLLEGE
Sept. 20 at Buffalo
Sept. 27 at Virginia Tech
Oct. 4 LEHIGH
Oct. 11 at North Carolina State
Oct. 18 at Kent State
Oct. 25 AKRON
Nov. 1 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Nov. 8 RUTGERS
Nov. 15 at Wake Forest

NAVY

Aug. 30 VIRGINIA MILITARY
Sept. 6 at TCU
Sept. 20 EASTERN MICHIGAN
Sept. 27 at Rutgers
Oct. 4 AIR FORCE (Landover, MD)
Oct. 11 at Vanderbilt
Oct. 18 DELAWARE
Oct. 25 TULANE
Nov. 1 at Notre Dame
Nov. 8 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Nov. 22 ARMY @ Philadelphia, PA
Dec. 6 NOTRE DAME

Sept. 6 WASHINGTON STATE

Sept. 13 at Michigan
Sept. 20 MICHIGAN STATE
Sept. 27 at Purdue
Oct. 11 at Pittsburgh
Oct. 18 SOUTHERN CAL
Oct. 25 at Boston College
Nov. 1 FLORIDA STATE
Nov. 8 NAVY
Nov. 15 BRIGHAM YOUNG
Nov. 29 at Stanford
Dec. 6 at Syracuse

SOUTH FLORIDA

Aug. 30 at Alabama @ Birmingham, AL
Sept. 27 at Army
Oct. 4 LOUISVILLE
Oct. 10 TCU (Fri.)
Oct. 25 at Southern Miss
Nov. 1 CINCINNATI
Nov. 8 at East Carolina
Nov. 22 UAB
Nov. 29 at Memphis

TROY STATE

Aug. 30 at Kansas State
Sept. 6 at Minnesota
Sept. 13 at UAB
Sept. 20 SE LOUISIANA
Sept. 27 MARSHALL
Oct. 4 at Nebraska
Oct. 18 FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL
Oct. 25 at Virginia
Nov. 1 at North Texas
Nov. 8 at Middle Tennessee
Nov. 15 at Utah State
Nov. 22 LOUISIANA-MONROE

UTAH STATE

Aug. 28 at Utah (Thur.)
Sept. 6 at Nebraska
Sept. 13 at Arizona State
Sept. 27 LOUISIANA-MONROE
Oct. 4 at New Mexico
Oct. 11 WYOMING
Oct. 18 at North Texas
Oct. 25 ARKANSAS STATE
Nov. 1 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Nov. 8 at New Mexico State
Nov. 15 TROY STATE
Nov. 22 at Idaho

MAC

AKRON

Aug. 28 KENT STATE (Thur.)
Sept. 6 at Wisconsin
Sept. 13 EASTERN MICHIGAN
Sept. 20 HOWARD
Sept. 27 at Buffalo
Oct. 4 at Miami (OH)
Oct. 11 CAL POLY SLO
Oct. 18 UCF
Oct. 25 at Connecticut
Nov. 1 at Marshall
Nov. 8 at Central Michigan
Nov. 15 OHIO

BALL STATE

Aug. 30 INDIANA STATE
Sept. 6 MISSOURI
Sept. 13 at Pittsburgh
Sept. 20 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Sept. 27 at Boston College
Oct. 4 at Kent State
Oct. 18 MIAMI (OH)
Oct. 25 TOLEDO
Nov. 1 at Northern Illinois
Nov. 8 at Western Michigan
Nov. 15 at Eastern Michigan
Nov. 22 BOWLING GREEN

BOWLING GREEN

Aug. 28 EASTERN KENTUCKY
Sept. 6 at Purdue
Sept. 13 LIBERTY
Sept. 20 at Ohio State
Oct. 4 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Oct. 11 at Western Michigan
Oct. 18 at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 25 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Nov. 4 at Miami (OH)
Nov. 15 KENT STATE
Nov. 22 at Ball State
Nov. 28 TOLEDO

BUFFALO

Aug. 30 at Rutgers
Sept. 6 at Iowa
Sept. 13 COLGATE
Sept. 20 CONNECTICUT
Sept. 27 AKRON
Oct. 4 at UCF
Oct. 11 at Miami (OH)
Oct. 18 MARSHALL
Oct. 25 OHIO
Nov. 1 at Toledo
Nov. 8 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Nov. 22 at Kent State

CENTRAL MICHIGAN

Aug. 30 at Michigan
Sept. 6 NEW HAMPSHIRE
Sept. 13 EASTERN KENTUCKY
Sept. 20 at Ball State
Oct. 4 at Bowling Green
Oct. 11 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Oct. 18 TOLEDO
Oct. 25 at UCF
Nov. 1 EASTERN MICHIGAN
Nov. 8 AKRON

Nov. 15 at Western Michigan
Nov. 22 at Navy
Aug. 28 EAST TENNESSEE ST. (Thur.)
Sept. 4 WESTERN ILLINOIS (Thur.)
Sept. 13 at Akron
Sept. 20 at Navy
Sept. 27 MARYLAND
Oct. 4 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Oct. 11 at Toledo
Oct. 18 BOWLING GREEN
Nov. 1 at Central Michigan
Nov. 8 UCF
Nov. 15 BALL STATE
Nov. 22 at Northern Illinois

KENT STATE

Aug. 28 at Akron (Thur.)
Sept. 6 at Pittsburgh
Sept. 13 YOUNGSTOWN STATE
Sept. 20 at Penn State
Sept. 27 UCF
Oct. 4 BALL STATE
Oct. 11 at Marshall
Oct. 18 CONNECTICUT
Oct. 25 MIAMI (OH)
Nov. 8 at Ohio
Nov. 15 at Bowling Green
Nov. 22 BUFFALO

MARSHALL

Aug. 30 HOFSTRA
Sept. 6 at Tennessee
Sept. 12 TOLEDO (Fri.)
Sept. 20 at Kansas State
Sept. 27 at Troy State
Oct. 11 KENT STATE
Oct. 18 at Buffalo
Oct. 25 at Western Michigan
Nov. 1 AKRON
Nov. 12 at Miami (OH) (Wed.)
Nov. 19 at UCF (Wed.)
Nov. 28 OHIO (Fri.)

MIAMI (OH)

Aug. 30 at Iowa
Sept. 13 at Northwestern
Sept. 20 at Colorado State
Sept. 27 CINCINNATI
Oct. 4 AKRON
Oct. 11 BUFFALO
Oct. 18 at Ball State
Oct. 25 at Kent State
Nov. 5 BOWLING GREEN (Wed.)
Nov. 12 MARSHALL (Wed.)
Nov. 22 at Ohio
Nov. 28 at UCF (Fri.)

NORTHERN ILLINOIS

Aug. 28 MARYLAND (Thur.)
Sept. 6 TENNESSEE TECH
Sept. 20 at Alabama
Sept. 27 IOWA STATE
Oct. 4 OHIO
Oct. 11 at Central Michigan
Oct. 18 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Oct. 25 at Bowling Green
Nov. 1 BALL STATE
Nov. 8 at Buffalo
Nov. 15 at Toledo
Nov. 22 EASTERN MICHIGAN

OHIO

Aug. 28 SE MISSOURI STATE (Thur.)
Sept. 6 at Iowa State
Sept. 13 MINNESOTA
Sept. 27 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Oct. 4 at Northern Illinois
Oct. 11 UCF
Oct. 18 at Kentucky
Oct. 25 at Buffalo
Nov. 8 KENT STATE
Nov. 15 at Akron
Nov. 22 MIAMI (OH)
Nov. 28 at Marshall (Fri.)

TOLEDO

Aug. 30 at UNLV
Sept. 6 LIBERTY
Sept. 12 at Marshall (Fri.)
Sept. 20 PITTSBURGH
Sept. 27 at Syracuse
Oct. 11 EASTERN MICHIGAN
Oct. 18 at Central Michigan
Oct. 25 at Ball State
Nov. 1 BUFFALO
Nov. 15 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Nov. 22 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Nov. 29 at Bowling Green

UCF

Aug. 31 at Virginia Tech (Sun.)
Sept. 6 FLORIDA ATLANTIC
Sept. 20 at Syracuse
Sept. 27 at Kent State
Oct. 4 BUFFALO
Oct. 11 at Ohio
Oct. 18 at Akron
Oct. 25 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Nov. 1 at West Virginia
Nov. 8 at Eastern Michigan
Nov. 19 MARSHALL (Wed.)
Nov. 28 MIAMI (OH)

WESTERN MICHIGAN

Aug. 30 at Michigan State
Sept. 6 WILLIAM & MARY
Sept. 13 VIRGINIA
Sept. 27 at Ohio

Oct. 4 at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 11 BOWLING GREEN
Oct. 18 at Northern Illinois
Oct. 25 MARSHALL
Nov. 1 at Connecticut
Nov. 8 BALL STATE
Nov. 15 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Nov. 22 at Toledo

MWC

AIR FORCE

Aug. 30 WOFFORD
Sept. 6 at Northwestern
Sept. 13 NORTH TEXAS
Sept. 20 WYOMING
Sept. 27 at Brigham Young
Oct. 4 at Navy
Oct. 11 UNLV
Oct. 16 at Colorado State (Thur.)
Nov. 1 UTAH
Nov. 8 ARMY
Nov. 15 at New Mexico
Nov. 22 at San Diego State

BRIGHAM YOUNG

Aug. 28 GEORGIA TECH (Thur.)
Sept. 6 at Southern Cal
Sept. 13 at New Mexico
Sept. 20 STANFORD
Sept. 27 AIR FORCE
Oct. 4 at San Diego State
Oct. 9 COLORADO STATE (Thur.)
Oct. 18 at Wyoming
Oct. 25 at UNLV
Nov. 1 BOISE STATE (Fri.)
Nov. 15 at Notre Dame
Nov. 22 UTAH

COLORADO STATE

Aug. 30 Colorado @ Denver, CO
Sept. 6 at California
Sept. 13 WEBER STATE
Sept. 20 MIAMI (OH)
Sept. 27 UTAH
Oct. 4 FRESNO STATE
Oct. 9 at Brigham Young (Thur.)
Oct. 16 AIR FORCE (Thur.)
Nov. 1 at Wyoming
Nov. 7 at New Mexico (Fri.)
Nov. 15 SAN DIEGO STATE
Nov. 22 at UNLV

NEW MEXICO

Aug. 30 SOUTHWEST TEXAS STATE
Sept. 6 at Texas Tech
Sept. 13 BRIGHAM YOUNG
Sept. 20 at Washington State
Sept. 27 NEW MEXICO STATE
Oct. 4 UTAH STATE
Oct. 18 at San Diego State
Oct. 25 at Utah
Nov. 1 UNLV
Nov. 7 COLORADO STATE (Fri.)
Nov. 15 AIR FORCE
Nov. 22 at Wyoming

SAN DIEGO STATE

Aug. 30 EASTERN WASHINGTON
Sept. 6 at Ohio State
Sept. 13 UTEP
Sept. 20 SANFORD
Sept. 27 at UCLA
Oct. 4 BRIGHAM YOUNG
Oct. 11 at Utah
Oct. 18 NEW MEXICO
Oct. 25 WYOMING
Nov. 8 at UNLV
Nov. 15 at Colorado State
Nov. 22 AIR FORCE

UNLV

Aug. 30 TOLEDO
Sept. 6 at Kansas
Sept. 13 at Wisconsin
Sept. 20 HAWAII
Oct. 4 at Nevada
Oct. 11 at Air Force
Oct. 18 UTAH
Oct. 25 BRIGHAM YOUNG
Nov. 1 at New Mexico
Nov. 8 SAN DIEGO STATE
Nov. 22 COLORADO STATE
Nov. 29 at Wyoming

UTAH

Aug. 28 UTAH STATE (Thur.)
Sept. 6 at Texas A&M
Sept. 11 CALIFORNIA (Thur.)
Sept. 27 at Colorado State
Oct. 3 OREGON (Fri.)
Oct. 11 SAN DIEGO STATE
Oct. 18 at UNLV
Oct. 25 NEW MEXICO
Nov. 1 at Air Force
Nov. 15 WYOMING
Nov. 22 at Brigham Young

WYOMING

Aug. 30 MONTANA STATE
Sept. 6 at Oklahoma State
Sept. 13 KANSAS
Sept. 20 at Air Force
Sept. 27 at Boise State
Oct. 11 at Utah State
Oct. 18 BRIGHAM YOUNG
Oct. 25 at San Diego State
Nov. 1 COLORADO STATE
Nov. 15 at Utah
Nov. 22 NEW MEXICO

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Nov. 29 UNLV

PAC-10

ARIZONA

Aug. 30 UTEP
Sept. 6 LSU
Sept. 13 OREGON
Sept. 20 at Purdue
Sept. 27 TCU
Oct. 4 at Washington State
Oct. 11 UCLA
Oct. 25 at California
Nov. 1 at Oregon State
Nov. 8 WASHINGTON
Nov. 15 SOUTHERN CAL
Nov. 22 at Arizona State

ARIZONA STATE

Sept. 6 NORTHERN ARIZONA
Sept. 13 UTAH STATE
Sept. 20 at Iowa
Sept. 27 at Oregon State
Oct. 4 SOUTHERN CAL
Oct. 11 OREGON
Oct. 18 at North Carolina
Oct. 25 at UCLA
Nov. 1 CALIFORNIA
Nov. 8 at Stanford
Nov. 15 at Washington State
Nov. 22 ARIZONA

CALIFORNIA

Aug. 23 Kansas State @ Kansas City
Aug. 30 SOUTHERN MISS
Sept. 6 COLORADO STATE
Sept. 11 at Utah (Thur.)
Sept. 20 at Illinois
Sept. 27 SOUTHERN CAL
Oct. 4 OREGON STATE
Oct. 18 at UCLA
Oct. 25 ARIZONA
Nov. 1 at Arizona State
Nov. 8 at Oregon
Nov. 15 WASHINGTON
Nov. 22 at Stanford

OREGON

Aug. 30 at Mississippi State
Sept. 6 NEVADA
Sept. 13 at Arizona
Sept. 20 MICHIGAN
Sept. 27 WASHINGTON STATE
Oct. 3 at Utah (Fri.)
Oct. 11 at Arizona State
Oct. 25 STANFORD
Nov. 1 at Washington
Nov. 8 CALIFORNIA
Nov. 15 at UCLA
Nov. 22 OREGON STATE

OREGON STATE

Aug. 30 SACRAMENTO STATE
Sept. 6 at Fresno State
Sept. 13 NEW MEXICO STATE
Sept. 20 BOISE STATE
Sept. 27 ARIZONA STATE
Oct. 4 at California
Oct. 18 WASHINGTON
Oct. 25 at Washington State
Nov. 1 ARIZONA
Nov. 15 STANFORD
Nov. 22 at Oregon
Dec. 6 at Southern Cal

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Aug. 30 at Auburn
Sept. 6 BRIGHAM YOUNG
Sept. 13 HAWAII
Sept. 27 at California
Oct. 4 at Arizona State
Oct. 11 STANFORD
Oct. 18 at Notre Dame
Oct. 25 at Washington
Nov. 1 WASHINGTON STATE
Nov. 15 at Arizona
Nov. 22 UCLA
Dec. 6 OREGON STATE

STANFORD

Sept. 6 SAN JOSE STATE
Sept. 20 at Brigham Young
Sept. 27 at Washington
Oct. 11 at Southern Cal
Oct. 18 WASHINGTON STATE
Oct. 25 at Oregon
Nov. 1 UCLA
Nov. 8 ARIZONA STATE
Nov. 15 at Oregon State
Nov. 22 CALIFORNIA
Nov. 29 NOTRE DAME

UCLA

Sept. 6 at Colorado
Sept. 13 ILLINOIS
Sept. 20 at Oklahoma
Sept. 27 SAN DIEGO STATE
Oct. 4 WASHINGTON
Oct. 11 at Arizona
Oct. 18 CALIFORNIA
Oct. 25 ARIZONA STATE
Nov. 1 at Stanford
Nov. 8 at Washington State
Nov. 15 OREGON
Nov. 22 at Southern Cal

WASHINGTON

Aug. 30 at Ohio State
Sept. 6 INDIANA
Sept. 20 IDAHO
Sept. 27 STANFORD

Oct. 4 at UCLA
Oct. 11 NEVADA
Oct. 18 at Oregon State
Oct. 25 SOUTHERN CAL
Nov. 1 OREGON
Nov. 8 at Arizona
Nov. 15 at California
Nov. 22 WASHINGTON STATE

WASHINGTON STATE

Aug. 30 Idaho @ Seattle, WA
Sept. 6 at Notre Dame
Sept. 13 at Colorado
Sept. 20 NEW MEXICO
Sept. 27 at Oregon
Oct. 4 ARIZONA
Oct. 18 at Stanford
Oct. 25 OREGON STATE
Nov. 1 at Southern Cal
Nov. 8 UCLA
Nov. 15 ARIZONA STATE
Nov. 22 at Washington

SEC

ALABAMA

Aug. 30 South Florida
Sept. 6 OKLAHOMA
Sept. 13 KENTUCKY
Sept. 20 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Sept. 27 ARKANSAS
Oct. 4 at Georgia
Oct. 11 SOUTHERN MISS
Oct. 18 at Mississippi
Oct. 25 TENNESSEE
Nov. 8 at Mississippi State
Nov. 15 LSU
Nov. 22 at Auburn
Nov. 29 at Hawaii

ARKANSAS

Sept. 6 TULSA
Sept. 13 at Texas
Sept. 20 NORTH TEXAS
Sept. 27 at Alabama
Oct. 11 ALBURN
Oct. 18 FLORIDA
Oct. 25 at Mississippi
Nov. 1 at Kentucky
Nov. 8 SOUTH CAROLINA
Nov. 15 New Mexico State
Nov. 22 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Nov. 29 at LSU

AUBURN

Aug. 30 SOUTHERN CAL
Sept. 6 at Georgia Tech
Sept. 13 at Vanderbilt
Sept. 27 WESTERN KENTUCKY
Oct. 4 TENNESSEE
Oct. 11 at Arkansas
Oct. 18 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Oct. 25 at LSU
Nov. 1 LOUISIANA-MONROE
Nov. 8 MISSISSIPPI
Nov. 15 at Georgia
Nov. 22 ALABAMA

FLORIDA

Aug. 30 SAN JOSE STATE
Sept. 6 at Miami (Fl.)
Sept. 13 FLORIDA A&M
Sept. 20 TENNESSEE
Sept. 27 at Kentucky
Oct. 4 MISSISSIPPI
Oct. 11 at LSU
Oct. 18 at Arkansas
Oct. 25 Georgia @ Jacksonville, FL
Nov. 1 VANDERBILT
Nov. 8 at South Carolina
Nov. 15 FLORIDA STATE

GEORGIA

Aug. 30 at Clemson
Sept. 6 Middle Tennessee ST.
Sept. 13 SOUTH CAROLINA
Sept. 20 at LSU
Oct. 4 ALABAMA
Oct. 11 at Tennessee
Oct. 18 at Vanderbilt
Oct. 25 UAB
Nov. 1 Florida @ Jacksonville, FL
Nov. 15 AUBURN
Nov. 22 KENTUCKY
Nov. 29 at Georgia Tech

KENTUCKY

Aug. 31 LOUISVILLE
Sept. 6 MURRAY STATE
Sept. 13 at Alabama
Sept. 20 at Indiana
Sept. 27 FLORIDA
Oct. 11 at South Carolina
Oct. 18 OHIO
Oct. 25 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Nov. 1 ARKANSAS
Nov. 15 at Vanderbilt
Nov. 22 at Georgia
Nov. 29 TENNESSEE

LSU

Aug. 30 LOUISIANA-MONROE
Sept. 6 at Arizona
Sept. 13 WESTERN ILLINOIS
Sept. 20 GEORGIA
Sept. 27 at Mississippi State
Oct. 4 FLORIDA
Oct. 11 at South Carolina
Oct. 18 AUBURN
Oct. 25 LOUISIANA TECH
Nov. 1 at Alabama
Nov. 15 at Mississippi
Nov. 22 ARKANSAS

MISSISSIPPI

Aug. 30 at Vanderbilt
Sept. 6 at Memphis
Sept. 13 LOUISIANA-MONROE
Sept. 27 TEXAS TECH
Oct. 4 at Florida
Oct. 11 ARKANSAS STATE
Oct. 18 ALABAMA
Oct. 25 ARKANSAS
Nov. 1 SOUTH CAROLINA
Nov. 8 at Auburn
Nov. 22 LSU
Nov. 27 at Mississippi State

MISSISSIPPI STATE

Aug. 30 OREGON
Sept. 13 at Tulane
Sept. 20 at Houston
Sept. 27 LSU
Oct. 4 VANDERBILT
Oct. 11 MEMPHIS
Oct. 18 at Auburn
Oct. 25 at Kentucky
Nov. 8 ALABAMA
Nov. 15 at Tennessee
Nov. 22 at Arkansas
Nov. 27 MISSISSIPPI

SOUTH CAROLINA

Aug. 30 LOUISIANA-LAFAYETTE
Sept. 6 VIRGINIA
Sept. 13 at Georgia
Sept. 20 UAB
Sept. 27 at Tennessee
Oct. 11 KENTUCKY
Oct. 18 LSU
Oct. 25 VANDERBILT
Nov. 1 at Mississippi
Nov. 8 at Arkansas
Nov. 15 FLORIDA
Nov. 22 CLEMSON

TENNESSEE

Oct. 30 FRESNO STATE
Sept. 6 MARSHALL
Sept. 20 at Florida
Sept. 27 SOUTH CAROLINA
Oct. 4 at Auburn
Oct. 11 GEORGIA
Oct. 25 at Alabama
Nov. 1 DUKE
Nov. 8 at Miami
Nov. 15 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Nov. 20 VANDERBILT
Nov. 27 at Kentucky

VANDERBILT

Aug. 30 MISSISSIPPI
Sept. 6 UT Chattanooga
Sept. 13 AUBURN
Sept. 20 TCU
Sept. 27 GEORGIA TECH
Oct. 4 at Mississippi State
Oct. 11 NAVY
Oct. 18 NASHVILLE
Oct. 25 at South Carolina
Nov. 8 at Florida
Nov. 15 KENTUCKY
Nov. 22 at Tennessee

SUN BELT

ARKANSAS STATE

Aug. 30 at Texas A&M
Sept. 6 TENNESSEE-MARTIN
Sept. 13 SE MISSOURI STATE
Sept. 20 at Tulsa
Sept. 27 at Memphis
Oct. 4 LA-MONROE @ Little Rock
Oct. 11 at Mississippi
Oct. 18 at Utah State
Oct. 25 at New Mexico State
Nov. 1 IDAHO
Nov. 8 at North Texas
Nov. 15 MIDDLE TENNESSEE

IDAHO

Aug. 30 Washington State @ Seattle
Sept. 6 EASTERN WASHINGTON
Sept. 13 BOISE STATE
Sept. 20 at Washington
Sept. 27 at Montana
Oct. 4 at New Mexico State
Oct. 11 NORTH TEXAS
Oct. 18 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Oct. 25 at Louisiana-Lafayette
Nov. 8 at Arkansas State
Nov. 15 at Louisiana-Monroe
Nov. 22 UTAH STATE

LOUISIANA-MONROE

Aug. 30 at Louisiana State
Sept. 6 STEPHEN F. AUSTIN
Sept. 13 at Mississippi
Sept. 20 NORTHWESTERN STATE
Sept. 27 at Utah State
Oct. 4 at Arkansas State @ Little Rock
Oct. 11 at Louisiana-Lafayette
Oct. 25 NEW MEXICO STATE
Nov. 1 at Auburn
Nov. 8 NORTH TEXAS
Nov. 15 IDAHO
Nov. 22 at Troy State

LOUISIANA-LAFAYETTE

Aug. 30 at South Carolina
Sept. 6 LOUISIANA TECH
Sept. 13 HOUSTON
Sept. 20 at Minnesota
Sept. 27 at North Texas
Oct. 4 at Oklahoma State

Oct. 11 LOUISIANA-MONROE
Oct. 18 NEW MEXICO STATE
Oct. 25 IDAHO
Nov. 1 at Southern Miss
Nov. 8 FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL
Nov. 16 at Middle Tennessee

MIDDLE TENNESSEE

Aug. 28 FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL
Sept. 6 at Georgia
Sept. 13 at Clemson
Sept. 20 at Missouri
Oct. 4 TEMPLE
Oct. 11 NEW MEXICO STATE
Oct. 18 IDAHO
Oct. 25 NORTH TEXAS
Nov. 1 at Utah State
Nov. 8 TROY STATE
Nov. 15 LOUISIANA-LAFAYETTE
Nov. 22 ARKANSAS STATE

NEW MEXICO STATE

Aug. 30 at Texas
Sept. 6 WESTERN NEW MEXICO
Sept. 13 at Oregon State
Sept. 27 at New Mexico
Oct. 4 IDAHO
Oct. 11 at Middle Tennessee
Oct. 18 at Louisiana-Lafayette
Oct. 25 at Louisiana-Monroe
Nov. 1 ARKANSAS STATE
Nov. 8 UTAH STATE
Nov. 15 at Arkansas
Nov. 25 NORTH TEXAS (Tue.)

NORTH TEXAS

Aug. 30 at Oklahoma
Sept. 6 BAYLOR
Sept. 13 at Air Force
Sept. 20 at Arkansas @ Little Rock
Sept. 27 LOUISIANA-LAFAYETTE
Oct. 11 at Idaho
Oct. 18 UTAH STATE
Oct. 25 at Middle Tennessee
Nov. 1 TROY STATE
Nov. 8 at Louisiana-Monroe
Nov. 15 ARKANSAS STATE
Nov. 25 at New Mexico State (Tue.)

WAC

BOISE STATE

Sept. 6 IDAHO STATE
Sept. 13 at Idaho @ Pullman, WA
Sept. 20 at Oregon State
Sept. 27 WYOMING
Oct. 4 at Louisiana Tech
Oct. 11 TULSA
Oct. 18 at SMU
Oct. 25 SAN JOSE STATE
Oct. 31 at Brigham Young (Fri.)
Nov. 15 UTEP
Nov. 21 at Fresno State (Fri.)
Nov. 29 NEVADA
Dec. 6 at Hawaii

FRESNO STATE

Aug. 30 at Tennessee
Sept. 6 OREGON STATE
Sept. 13 at Oklahoma
Sept. 20 LOUISIANA TECH
Sept. 27 PORTLAND STATE
Oct. 4 at Colorado State
Oct. 11 at Hawaii
Oct. 18 RICE
Oct. 25 at SMU
Nov. 1 at Nevada
Nov. 8 SAN JOSE STATE
Nov. 15 BOISE STATE (Fri.)
Nov. 21 at UTEP

HAWAII

Aug. 30 APPALACHIAN STATE
Sept. 13 at Southern Cal
Sept. 20 at UNLV
Sept. 27 RICE
Oct. 4 at Tulsa
Oct. 11 FRESNO STATE
Oct. 18 at Louisiana Tech
Oct. 25 UTEP
Nov. 1 at San Jose State
Nov. 15 at Nevada
Nov. 22 ARMY

Nov. 29 ALABAMA
Dec. 6 BOISE STATE
Aug. 30 MIAMI (Fl.) @ Shreveport, LA
Sept. 6 at Louisiana-Lafayette
Sept. 13 at Michigan State
Sept. 20 BOISE STATE
Oct. 4 at UTEP
Oct. 11 HAWAII
Oct. 25 at Nevada
Nov. 1 at Louisiana State
Nov. 8 SMU
Nov. 15 at Tulsa
Nov. 22 RICE

NEVADA

Aug. 30 SOUTHERN UTAH
Sept. 6 at Oregon
Sept. 20 at San Jose State
Sept. 27 SMU
Oct. 4 UNLV
Oct. 11 at Washington
Oct. 18 at Tulsa
Oct. 25 LOUISIANA TECH
Nov. 1 at Rice
Nov. 8 FRESNO STATE
Nov. 15 HAWAII
Nov. 22 at Boise State

RICE

Aug. 30 at Houston
Sept. 13 at Duke
Sept. 20 TEXAS
Sept. 27 at Hawaii
Oct. 4 SAN JOSE STATE
Oct. 11 NAVY
Oct. 18 at Fresno State
Oct. 25 NEVADA
Nov. 1 TULSA
Nov. 8 at SMU
Nov. 15 UTEP
Nov. 22 at Louisiana Tech

SAN JOSE STATE

Aug. 23 GRABBLING STATE
Aug. 30 at Florida
Sept. 6 at Stanford
Sept. 20 NEVADA
Oct. 4 at Rice
Oct. 11 SMU
Oct. 25 at Boise State
Nov. 1 HAWAII
Nov. 8 at UTEP
Nov. 15 at Fresno State
Nov. 22 TULSA

SMU

Aug. 30 at Texas Tech
Sept. 13 at Baylor
Sept. 20 OKLAHOMA STATE
Sept. 27 at Nevada
Oct. 4 UTEP
Oct. 11 at San Jose State
Oct. 18 BOISE STATE
Oct. 25 at Tulsa
Nov. 1 FRESNO STATE
Nov. 8 at Louisiana Tech
Nov. 15 RICE
Nov. 22 TCU

UTEP

Aug. 30 at Arizona
Sept. 13 SAN DIEGO STATE
Sept. 20 at Louisville
Oct. 4 at SMU
Oct. 11 LOUISIANA TECH
Oct. 25 at Hawaii
Nov. 1 TULSA
Nov. 8 SAN JOSE STATE
Nov. 15 at Boise State
Nov. 22 at Rice
Nov. 29 FRESNO STATE

TULSA

Aug. 30 at Minnesota
Sept. 6 at Arkansas
Sept. 13 SW TEXAS STATE
Sept. 20 ARKANSAS STATE
Oct. 4 HAWAII
Oct. 11 at Boise State
Oct. 18 NEVADA
Oct. 25 SMU
Nov. 1 at UTEP
Nov. 8 at Rice
Nov. 15 LOUISIANA TECH
Nov. 22 at San Jose State

NATIONAL RECRUITING

By Allen Wallace
SuperPrep



1

Southern California

Previous eight-year rank (7 in 2002, 19, 11, 14, 16, 15, 5, 9)

The Trojans loaded up everywhere, including a stunning development at quarterback in April when **John David Booty** decided to bypass his senior season at Evangel Christian Academy in Shreveport, La., and enroll at USC in the fall, a year ahead of schedule. He could have been the top prep player in the class of 2004.

Booty's timetable changed when his father was released from his position as quarterbacks coach at Evangel Christian.

Back in February, the Trojans stocked up at every other position, mostly with in-state All-Americans — 12 of *SuperPrep's* top 17 California prospects signed with USC. Plus, RB **Lendale White** from Colorado and DL **Ryan Watson** from Louisiana could have signed anywhere they wanted.

Joining White in the backfield are RB **Reggie Bush**, who sent Notre Dame followers into an Internet-wide depression when he didn't visit South Bend, and L.A. bruiser **Chauncey Washington**.

Moreover, Pete Carroll landed two superstar receivers — **Whitney Lewis** and **Steve Smith**.

Both lines also stand out, led by OLs **Sam Baker** and **Drew Radovich** as well as DLs **Sedric Ellis**, **Lawrence Jackson** and **Chris Barrett**. Each of the DLs is a *SuperPrep* Elite 50 pick, joining Bush, Lewis and White. Two other signees — DB **Eric Wright** and LB **Thomas Williams** — were named to *SuperPrep's* Elite 100 team.

Seven stellar defensive backs jump on board, including ultra-talented **Darnell Bing**, who signed in '02 but enrolled in January. This class has an athleticism unmatched by any USC group since the days of John McKay.



2

Florida

Previous eight-year rank (24, 30, 1, 7, 7, 3, 13, 3)

This probably will always be referred to as the **Chris Leak** class, even if Leak somehow doesn't pan out. The star quarterback, who committed at a low point for beleaguered coach Ron Zook served as a Pied Piper of sorts, leading recruits into Gainesville at breakneck speed.

Building off that momentum, Zook persuaded an amazing group of athletes to become Gators. Along with Leak, at the front of that list are DB **Demetric Webb** and WR **Andre Caldwell**, *SuperPrep's* No. 6 and No. 15 prospects nationally. Leak was ranked No. 16.

The list continues with DE **Jarvis Moss** (No. 46), FB **Joe Cohen** (No. 47) and WR **Chad Jackson** (No. 53) ... and on to include nine *SuperPrep* All-Americans. Zook also jumped into the junior college ranks with the December signings of four of *SuperPrep's* top 32 JC players — DL **Eric Holcombe**, OL **Tavares Washington**, TE **David Kenner** and OL **Anthony Guerrero**.



3

LSU

Previous eight-year rank (19, 2, 26, 9, 9, 11, 10, 31)

Early on signing day, the Tigers lost *SuperPrep's* No. 2 QB, Robert

Lane, to Ole Miss. By day's end, Lane was replaced by the No. 4 QB, **Jamarcus Russell** from Alabama. Other *SuperPrep* All-Americans from out of state who are headed to Baton Rouge are Florida WR **Amp Hill**, Texas DE **Tim Washington**, Mississippi OL **Will Arnold** and DL **Sean Merrill**.

Those players alone are quite a haul, but Nick Saban generated the most headlines by thoroughly dominating in-state recruiting, signing eight of the top 10 and 14 of the top 20, led by DB **Nick Child** (No. 22 in country), DE **Kirston Pittman** (No. 58), DB **Laron Landry** (No. 67) and WR **Craig Davis** (No. 81).

Both Davis and DB **Darryl Johnson**, another *SuperPrep* All-American out of New Orleans, de-committed from Miami late in the recruiting derby, setting the stage for Saban's strong finish.



4

Oklahoma

Previous eight-year rank (8, 6, 19, 36, 20, 24, 32, 37)

Bob Stoops was looking for balance and speed — and that's exactly what he delivered with only five in-staters on board.

Two areas that stand out are the defensive line and secondary. *SuperPrep* All-American **Moe Dampeer** from Illinois added to an already strong defensive front when he chose OU over the Illini two days after signing day. All-Americans **Carl Pendleton**, **Steven Coleman** and **Alonzo Dotson** were already in the fold.

The secondary signees are led by **Tony Cade**, a vicious tackler ranked by *SuperPrep* as the ninth-best prospect in the country. DB **Donte Nicholson** (enrolled early) was *SuperPrep's* No. 13 Juco, and he will be joined by fellow TE **Willie Roberts** (No. 3 Juco) to give Stoops some immediate help.

A total of 14 *SuperPrep* All-Americans signed with OU and, as usual, many of them are Texans, including TE/QB **Joe Jon Finley**. Finley figures to get stiff competition at the signal-caller spot from California All-American **Tommy Grady**, who has a fantastic arm.



5

Notre Dame

Previous eight-year rank (18, 14, 12, 8, 3, 9, 6, 1)

Athletes **Chase Anastasio** and **Ambrose Wooden**, LB **Mitchell Thomas** and DE **Victor Abiamiri** jumped into the big-time tradition that Ty Willingham re-ignited last season.

Although Abiamiri is the most promising defensive lineman to sign with Notre Dame since *SuperPrep* started in 1985, the key to this class is **Brady Quinn**, the next in a long line of Irish signees who think they can be the next Joe Montana.

That's what Notre Dame needs more than anything else — a QB who can pass and make clutch plays.

TE **Greg Olsen** and OL **John Sullivan**, both *SuperPrep* Elite 50 picks, lead nine other *SuperPrep* All-Americans in another coast-to-coast effort, further highlighted by California DB **Freddie Parrish** and LB **Joe Brockington** and RB **Travis Thomas**, both from Pennsylvania. Five signees are *SuperPrep* Elite 100 picks.

Willingham built this class with only 33 official trips. One drawback: No big-impact running backs.

NATIONAL RECRUITING



6

Miami

Previous eight-year rank (2, 9, 7, 11, 30, 13, 18, 16)

The 'Canes failed to close strongly, which cost them a top three rating, but Larry Coker managed to sign the biggest fish out there — California QB **Kyle Wright**, who enrolled in the spring and looks more promising than Ken Dorsey at a similar stage.

Other *SuperPrep* Elite 50 prospects joining Wright are DL **Nate Robinson** (No. 21) and RB **Tyrone Moss** (No. 31). Eleven *SuperPrep* All-Americans dot Miami's signing list.

Andrew Bain anchors an excellent group of offensive linemen, and **John Beason** and **Glenn Cook** will properly reinforce Miami's terrific linebacker position. A pair of 2002 signees — **Devin Hester** and **Darnell Jenkins** — re-signed and enrolled in the spring to fill the WR gap in this class.

Texas DL **Alton Wright** also re-signed after a stint at Kilgore (Texas) Junior College. Wright's teammate, TE **Kevin Everett**, was *SuperPrep's* No. 2 junior college prospect in the country. Everett will compete for second-string duties this season.



7

Texas A&M

Previous eight-year rank (28, 29, 27, 5, 33, 12, 28, 4)

He didn't get a quarterback, but Dennis Franchione basically waltzed through his first A&M recruiting season, lining up superior prospects at running back, linebacker, defensive back and linemen on both sides, led by fantastic OL **Jorrie Adams** (No. 40 prospect in country).

LB **Justin Warren** (No. 44) and WR **Earvin Taylor** (No. 83) were other *SuperPrep* 100s to land with the Aggies.

Although Franchione hooked up with an excellent seven *SuperPrep* All-Americans, one of the strongest parts of this class is a large corps of 14 highly ranked All-Regional picks in an entirely Texas contingent. Overall, they give this class versatility and punch.



8

North Carolina State

Previous eight-year rank (42, 23, UR, UR, 47, UR, 38, 47)

Coach Chuck Amato said this large 28-man signing class is the Wolfpack's best recruiting effort ever, and it includes seven newcomers who enrolled in January, including DE **Mario Williams**, *SuperPrep's* No. 2 defensive lineman in the country.

Pennsylvania (three signees) and Florida (13) were particularly fertile hunting grounds for Amato. Each of the Pennsylvania signees is a *SuperPrep* All-American: RB **Darrell Blackman**, QB **Marcus Stone** and DE **Raymond Brooks**. Amato's Sunshine State ties (he was a long-time Florida State assistant) helped him reel in *SuperPrep* All-American WR **Jimmie Sutton** (Texas de-commit) as well as other well-recognized talent such as TE **Jamesly Jean**, DBs **Miguel Scott** and **LeRue Rumph**, OL **Luke Lathan**, RBs **Brian Dennison** and **Reggie Davis** and DE **Maurice Charles**.



9

Michigan

Previous eight-year rank (10, 3, 13, 4, 2, 4, 7, 7)

Not a large class (17 signees), but it's packed with quality.

The group is led by DB **Ryan Mundy** (*SuperPrep's* No. 4 prospect in the country), LB **Lamar Woodley** (No. 20), DB **Prescott Burgess** (No. 25), DL **Will Paul** (No. 30), OL **Jeff Zuttah** (No. 69), LB **Shawn Crable** (No. 72) and QB **Clayton Richard** (78).

That's seven *SuperPrep* Elite 100 picks, only one short of Southern California's leading eight, which includes the re-signing of DB **Darnell Bing** from the class of '02. And Michigan has something the Trojans couldn't nail — a terrific QB prospect like **Richard**, who was *SuperPrep's* Midwest offensive player of the year, although he was to spend the summer pondering a professional baseball career.

Woodley, Crable and **James Presley** give Lloyd Carr an amazing group of linebackers. Missouri RB **Anton Campbell**, Louisiana TE/OL **Adam Kraus** and California DB **Leon Hall**, all *SuperPrep* All-Americans, nicely round out this class, which also includes kicker **Garrett Rivas**, the one Floridian to head to Ann Arbor.



10

South Carolina

Previous eight-year rank (13, 26, 39, 32, 28, 17, 19, 29)

You sense that Lou Holtz felt some urgency with this class — the highest-ranked Gamecocks effort that *SuperPrep* has covered.

Holtz landed the nation's finest junior college haul while also ringing up big numbers in the prep department, including four of the top six in-staters: RB **Demetrius Summer** (Elite 50), QB **Syvelle Newton** (Elite 100), WR **Noah Whiteside** (Elite 100) and LB **Ryan Brown**.

Several quick-fixes from the juco ranks enrolled in the spring: LB **Marcus Lawrence** (*SuperPrep* Juco No. 4), DL **Darrell Shropshire** (No. 7) and QB **Mike Rathe** (No. 49). Jucos DE **Charles Silas** (No. 10), OL **Woody Telfort** (No. 35), DL **Freddy Saint-Preux** (No. 60) and LB **DeAdrian Coley** (No. 63) are set for fall enrollment.

QB **Blake Mitchell**, another *SuperPrep* Elite 100 pick from Georgia, signed on, giving Holtz two fantastic prep prospects and a juco signee at quarterback — a big area of need.



11

Virginia

Previous eight-year rank (9, 33, 36, 22, 32, 16, 43, 46)

Seven of the newest Cavaliers are *SuperPrep* All-Americans, two of whom were named to the *SuperPrep* Elite 100 team: TE **Jonathan Stupar** (No. 33) and LB **Jermaine Diaz** (No. 74).

Al Groh signed a fine QB in **Kevin McCabe** from Pennsylvania, and got a boatload of top receivers to go with McCabe, including **Shannon Lane**, **Fontel Mines**, **Deyon Williams** and **Emmanuel Byers**. Either Williams or Byers could end up on defense, with **Robbie Catterton** and **Phillip Brown** who had six kick returns (four punts, two KO's) for TDs.

Groh dipped into Texas for *SuperPrep* All-American **Ian Yates** **Cunningham** and into Florida for superior **Jordy Lipsey**, who help form one of the nation's finest O-line hauls.

On defense, look for LB **Vincent Rudd** (LB), DL **Chris Johnson** and DL **Allen Billyk** to make an impact.



12

Ohio State

Previous eight-year rank (3, 15, 8, 2, 13, 16, 2, 28)

Even armed with a national title, Jim Tressel did not finish the recruiting season as he would have liked, with tough late losses preventing a top five ranking. But the players he got are definitely potential

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makers.

Donte Whitner, ranked by *SuperPrep* as the nation's No. 3 defensive back, heads a fantastic secondary group that includes **Ira Guilford**, **Dareus Hiley**, **Tony Gonzalez**, **Curt Lukens** and **Ashton Youboty**. Guilford was ranked No. 77 nationally by *SuperPrep*.

All-Americans who signed on to play in Columbus include DL **David Patterson** (No. 45 nationally), TE **Louis Irizarry** (No. 49), WR **Devin Jordan** and DL **Brandon Maupin**.

And don't forget about linebacker **Anthony Schlegel**, a transfer from Air Force. Schlegel, who was a team captain as a sophomore last season, is a tough, strong leader who could become a big deal in Columbus in 2004.



13

Georgia

Previous eight-year rank (14, 24, 42, 10, 5, 33, 17, 22)

The Dawgs latched onto six of *SuperPrep*'s top 10 in-state prospects, including the Big Three — DB **Paul Oliver**, WR **Sean Bailey** and **Kregg Lumpkin**, each named to *SuperPrep*'s Elite 50 team.

The only *SuperPrep* All-American recruited from out of state was South Carolina LB **Marcus Howard**. He is one reason why this linebacker group, which includes **Desmond Williams**, **Dana Graydon**, **Jarvis Jackson** and **Odell Thurman** (enrolled early), looks so promising.

Faced with losing major o-line talent to graduation, coach Mark Richt focused on the position, reeling in seven new blockers, led by All-American **Zeb McKinze**y and **Nick Jones**. TE **Coleman Watson**, WR **T.J. Gartrell** and RB **Danny Ware** give Richt additional offensive firepower.

SuperPrep All-American **Richard Cook** was the only defensive lineman who signed with Georgia, but the Dawgs stocked up nicely at the position a year earlier.



14

Boston College

Previous eight-year rank (26, 32, 32, 18, 41, UR, 26, 19)

Tom O'Brien made his three in-state prospects count, led by *SuperPrep* All-American OL **Gosder Cherilus** and RB **Lennox Whitworth**, an All-Regional pick. DB **Tyrone Pruitt** from Brockton is a sleeper. Cherilus could really blossom.

The state that contributed the most talent to Boston College is Ohio, where O'Brien found six signees, notably OLs **Ty Hall** and **Tom Anevski**, DLs **Nick Larkin** and **Ryan Thompson**, and DB **DeJuan Tribble** — all *SuperPrep* All-Midwest picks.

O'Brien also concentrated his efforts on New Jersey and was rewarded with two All-Americans in WR **Dorien Bryant** and RB **Andre Callendar**. Dorien is the highlight, ranked by *SuperPrep* as the 52nd-best prospect nationwide. He's a dangerous return man (six TDs) who also returned three interceptions for scores.



15

Texas

Previous eight-year rank (1, 5, 4, 1, 10, 7, 12, 20)

It can be tough following up four consecutive top five recruiting classes ... and this season Mack Brown ran into a little resistance.

The state's top six players, as rated by *SuperPrep*, all signed elsewhere, but the Longhorns still managed to sign seven *SuperPrep* All-Americans and 10 *SuperPrep* All-Regional players, all home grown. The studs include TE **Tony Hills** (No. 54 nationally), RB **Erik Hardeman** (No. 55) and LB **Robert Killebrew** (No. 95).

The DBs look particularly promising with All-Americans **Tarell Brown** and **Steve Richardson**, as well as **Michael Griffin**, **Erick Jackson**, **Eric Foreman** and **Brandon Foster**. WR **Limas Sweed** and DL **Tim Crowder** are the other *SuperPrep* All-Americans who will be playing in Austin.



16

North Carolina

Previous eight-year rank (44, 34, 29, 13, 12, 10, 43, 13)

The Tar Heels refused to let North Carolina State run away with the state's only superior recruiting effort. Like the Wolfpack, they hugely improved their results from the prior year.

John Bunting fought tooth and nail for the best in the state and came away with six of *SuperPrep*'s top 13 prospects: WR **Mike Mason** (Elite 100 pick), DL **Terry Hunter**, DL/OL **Isaiah Thomas**, DL **Marcus Hands**, DL/OL **Kyndraus Guy** and DB **Quinton Person**. Mason was just one of three truly elite wide-outs nationally.

Bunting brought in an exceptional linebacker class as well, led by *SuperPrep* All-Americans **Joe Kedra**, **Kory Gedin** and **Fred Sparkman** and All-Regional pick **Larry Edwards**.



17

Tennessee

Previous eight-year rank (5, 12, 2, 12, 8, 8, 8, 18)

The Vols pulled one of the major surprises of signing day when they wrestled Oklahoma WR **Robert Meacham** (*SuperPrep*'s No. 13 prospect nationally) away from the Sooners.

Throw in Alabama's **Jayson Swain** (No. 56 in country), All-American **Brett Smith** from Arkansas and *SuperPrep* All-Regional pick **Bill Grimes** from Georgia and you have an amazing influx of receiving talent.

The defensive line is also a strength, anchored by Elite 50 pick **Turk McBride**, All-American **Jared Hostetter** and All-Regional **Tony McDaniel** from South Carolina — a Clemson de-commit.

The Vols also hurt Clemson's class at the final hour when in-state OL **Eric Young** (No. 64 nationally), opted for Tennessee. The other *SuperPrep* All-Americans to sign with Phillip Fulmer are OL/DL **Steven Jones** and DBs **Corey Campbell** and **Roshaun Fellows**.



18

Washington

Previous eight-year rank (15, 4, 21, 42, 35, 21, 31, 23)

Per NCAA restrictions, coach Rick Neuheisel couldn't make home visits during the recruiting season, but that didn't stop out-of-staters jumping at the chance to play in Seattle.

What this class lacks in Elite 100 talent it makes up for with four *SuperPrep* All-Americans (WRs **Craig Chambers** and **Quintin Daniels** and DBs **Clarence Simpson** and **Derrick Bradley**). The WRs and DBs are the strongest part of this class. California supplied the RBs and they should be good: **Durrell Moss** and **Louis Rankin**. Kicker **Michael Braunstein**, ranked as the sixth-best overall prospect in Arizona, turned down numerous offers and could make an early impact for the Huskies.

Pre-Season Issue 1 (Aug. 15th)

A complete profile of the top 1,000 players nationally with complete biographies and photos of the top players.

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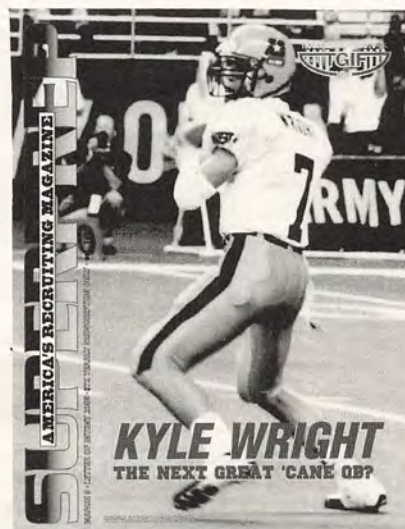
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NATIONAL RECRUITING



19

Stanford

Previous eight-year rank (25, 13, 25, 20, 18, 22, 29, 30)

Buddy Teevens knows how to recruit. He nicely carried on the Stanford tradition of going nationwide to sign the best and the brightest — only eight of 25 signees played in California.

Interestingly, only one (*SuperPrep* All-Regional DL **Michael Macellari**) is from the Midwest and none played his ball in the northeast.

The two tailbacks hail from Florida (Notre Dame de-commit **David Marrero**) and Georgia (Penn State de-commit **Jason Evans**). These are just two of the nine *SuperPrep* All-Americans who signed with Stanford, including QB **T.C. Ostrander**, who was right in Teevens' backyard in Atherton, Calif.

There are some defensive gems here, too, and PK/P **Jay Ottovengo** from Florida could turn out to be a very nice weapon.



20

California

Previous eight-year rank (UR, 48, 19, 40, 28, UR, UR)

Coming off a turnaround season, Jeff Tedford and staff needed a big influx of talent to help replace a senior-led team. Which is exactly what happened.

As opposed to the national effort that succeeded for Stanford across the bay, the Bears' class is made up of strictly Californians. Another big difference is Cal's reliance on very good junior college players such as *SuperPrep* Juco 100's DE **Ryan Riddle** (No. 31), QB **Aaron Rodgers** (No. 41), RB **J.J. Arrington** (No. 46) and TE **Garrett Cross** (No. 71).

This is a very deep effort, led by *SuperPrep* All-Americans defensive linemen **Leon Drummer** and **Brandon Mebane** and LB **Garrett Tremblay**. The D-line recruits headed to Berkeley are fantastic, and also include **Matt Malele**, **Josh Tauanu'u**, **Kyle McClure** and **Ray Tago**.



21

Maryland

Previous eight-year rank (21, 39, 41, 44, UR, 48, 27, 26)

Ralph Friedgen landed six *SuperPrep* All-Americans, led by Elite 50 choices LB **Wesley Jefferson** (No. 12) and ATH **Vernon Davis** (No. 39). The other All-Americans are QB **Ryan Mitch**, WR **Andrew Weatherly**, RB **Keon Lattimore** and DL **Conrad Bolston**.

Despite losing DL Victor Abiamiri and his teammate WR Ambrose Wooden to Notre Dame, the Terps cleaned up in the Mid-Atlantic area, signing six of *SuperPrep's* top nine players from the region.

Friedgen worked the fertile recruiting areas of Georgia (LB **Tim Cesa**), Florida (OL **Donnie Woods** — enrolled early), New Jersey (RB **Lance Ball** and DE **Omarr Savage**) and Pennsylvania (OLs **Brandon Nixon** and **Brock Choate**).



22

Virginia Tech

Previous eight-year rank (29, 8, 28, 31, 19, 42, 45, UR)

Although rival Virginia signed a better overall class, the Hokies took the cake in-state, landing 10 of the top 17 in-state prospects, including the top three — LBs **Xavier Adibi** and **Vince Hall** and DE **Chris Ellis**,

all Elite 100 prospects.

Tight ends, offensive line and linebacker really stand out in this class. OL **Tripp Carroll** is a *SuperPrep* All-American from North Carolina, joining **Matt Welsh** and All-Regional pick **Nick Marshman**. Adibi, Hall and **Brett Warren** are well-complemented with Florida's **Mike Brown** at linebacker.

DB **James Griffin**, one of three signed at the position, is a *SuperPrep* Juco 100 choice.



23

Florida State

Previous eight-year rank (4, 1, 3, 15, 4, 1, 3, 2)

As usual, Bobby Bowden finished in a blaze of glory, with *SuperPrep* Elite 50 members WR **Antonio Cromartie** (No. 3) and LB **Ernie Sims** (No. 10) choosing the Noles at the last minute.

Getting two of the nation's top 10 prospects is an amazing accomplishment ... but Bowden signed only four other *SuperPrep* All-Americans: DE **Alex Boston**, DL **Cliff Dickson** (Miami de-commit) and OLs **Aubrey McFadden** and **John Frady**. The O-line was a definite need for this team.

The Seminoles aimed amazingly high as always but were just too far behind on signing day to drill a normal top five class, losing prospects like FB Joe Cohen and DL Marcus Thomas to Florida, QB Jamarcus Russell to LSU and WR Whitney Lewis to Southern California. Another painful shock: On signing day, Tallahassee DB Ryan Gilliam stunned the recruiting world by signing with Oregon.



24

Nebraska

Previous eight-year rank (22, 20, 7, 15, 17, 17, 19, 4, 8)

Husker faithful are counting on QB **Joe Dailey** to deliver the goods; he's a pass-run threat who showed the kind of accuracy in high school to present a more formidable passing option than most Nebraska signal-callers. Dailey is going to have plenty of blocking up front, led by *SuperPrep* All-American OL **Ryan Schuler** (Oklahoma de-commit), **Brett Byford**, **Greg Austin** and **Darren DeLone** — *SuperPrep's* 66th-best juco prospect. Also signing with the Huskers from the Juco 100 list are DL **Wali Muhammed** (No. 27) and DB **Donald Debrand** (No. 100).

In-state All-Americans LB **Bo Ruud** and DL **Brandon Teamer** will help the cause, as will three *SuperPrep* All-Regional DBs from Texas: **Steve Craver**, **Adrain Turner** and **Titus Brothers**.



25

Purdue

Previous eight-year rank (30, 17, 20, 29, 22, UR, UR, UR)

Joe Tiller loaded up on offensive firepower again, signing two QBs — *SuperPrep* All-American **Scott Carroll** from Missouri and Texas *SuperPrep* All-Regional **Bill Foran**.

Tiller also signed six WRs, led by New Jersey's **Byron Williams** and in-stater **Cole Seifreg** — both All-Regional picks.

In addition to Carroll, All-Americans who will be playing in West Lafayette are TE **Garrett Bushong**, LB **Shaun Richardson**, DL **Doug Van Dyke** (*SuperPrep's* 43rd-best prospect in the country) and DE **Ray Edwards**.

Note: The rankings and players mentioned in this story may not match those in the regional recruiting feature due to differing writers' opinion.

NATIONAL RECRUITING

100 for 2003

INCOMING FRESHMEN

TOP 100 PLAYERS BY POSITION

Quarterbacks

Dennis Dixon	6-4, 186, 4.58	San Leandro, CA	Oregon
Johnny DuRocher	6-4, 200, 4.8	Spanaway-Bethel, WA	Oregon
Richard Kovalcheck	6-2, 205, 4.7	San Diego St. Augustine, CA	Arizona
Robert Lane	6-3, 210, 4.58	Monroe Neville, LA	Ole Miss
Chris Leak	6-1, 210, 4.6	Charlotte-Independence, NC	Florida
Blake Mitchell	6-4, 175, 4.7	LaGrange, GA	South Carolina
Syvelle Newton	6-2, 202, 4.4	Bennettsville-Marlboro County, SC	South Carolina
Brady Quinn	6-4, 210, 4.65	Dublin-Coffman, OH	Notre Dame
Clayton Richard	6-5, 230, 4.7	Lafayette-McCutcheon, IN	Michigan
Jamarcus Russell	6-6, 220, 4.7	Mobile-Williamson, AL	LSU
Marcus Stone	6-4, 220, 4.6	Harrisburg-Bishop McDevitt, PA	N.C. State
Kyle Wright	6-4, 200, 4.6	Danville-Monte Vista, CA	Miami

Running Backs

Darrell Blackman	6-1, 190, 4.35	Williamsport, PA	N.C. State
Alley Broussard	6-1, 228, 4.45	Lafayette-Acadiana, LA	LSU
Reggie Bush	6-0, 183, 4.4	La Mesa-Helix, CA	USC
Tim Castille	5-11, 220, 4.5	Birmingham-B'wood Christian, AL	Alabama
Joe Cohen	6-2, 243, 4.47	Melbourne-Palm Bay, FL	Florida
Erik Hardeman	6-1, 205, 4.47	Pflugerville, TX	Texas
Kregg Lumpkin	6-1, 200, 4.4	S.M. Stephenson, GA	Georgia
Tyrone Moss	5-10, 210, 4.4	Pompano Beach Ely, F	Miami
Austin Scott	6-1, 200, 4.4	Allentown-Parkland, PA	Penn State
Demetris Summers	6-1, 200, 4.5	Lexington, SC	South Carolina
Courtney Tennial	5-10, 205, 4.4	Glenpool, OK	Oklahoma
Pierre Thomas	5-11, 185, 4.4	Lansing-T.F. South, IL	Illinois
Lendale White	6-2, 230, 4.5	Littleton-Chatfield, CO	USC

Wide Receivers

Sean Bailey	6-1, 175, 4.4	Alpharetta-Milton, GA	Georgia
Adarius Bowman	6-4, 208, 4.5	Chattanooga-Notre Dame, TN	North Carolina
Andre Caldwell	6-2, 180, 4.38	Tampa-Jefferson, FL	Florida
Michael Griffin	6-1, 180, 4.4	Austin-James Bowie, TX	Texas
Chad Jackson	6-1, 200, 4.4	Hoover, AL	Florida
Whitney Lewis	6-1, 215, 4.35	Ventura-St. Bonaventure, CA	USC
Mike Mason	6-1, 170, 4.4	Rocky Mount, NC	North Carolina
Robert Meachem	6-2, 200, 4.3	Tulsa-Washington, OK	Tennessee
Reggie Nelson	6-2, 180, 4.35	Melbourne-Palm Bay, FL	Florida
Brett Smith	6-2, 175, 4.5	Warren, AR	Tennessee
Steve Smith	6-1, 185, 4.4	Woodland Hills-Taft, CA	USC
Jayson Swain	6-2, 205, 4.4	Huntsville-Grisson, AL	Tennessee
Limas Sweed	6-4, 203, 4.4	Brenham, TX	Texas

Tight Ends

Chris Barrett	6-5, 252, 4.58	Tustin, CA	USC
Vernon Davis	6-4, 220, 4.5	Washington D.C. Dunbar	Maryland
Tony Hills	6-6, 260, 4.7	Alief Elsie, TX	Texas
Louis Irizarry	6-5, 235, 4.7	Youngstown-Ursuline, OH	Ohio State
Greg Olsen	6-6, 240, 4.7	Wayne Hills, NJ	Notre Dame
Will Paul	6-4, 255, 4.59	Ballwin-Parkway W., MO	Michigan
Jon Stupar	6-5, 250, 4.8	State College, PA	Virginia

Offensive Linemen

Jorrie Adams	6-7, 270, 4.85	Jasper, TX	Texas A&M
Sam Baker	6-5, 310, 5.2	Tustin, CA	USC
Marcus Cohen	6-6, 290, 5.4	Clarksdale, MS	Florida
Donovan Davis	6-7, 330, 5.5	Jackson-Callaway, MS	Mississippi State
Ryan Harris	6-5, 260, 4.7	St. Paul-Cretin Derham, MN	Notre Dame
Mike Jones	6-5, 305, 5.0	Oak Lawn-Richards, IL	Iowa
Dominic Lee	6-3, 295, 5.0	Birmingham Huffman, AL	Alabama
Ofa Mohetau	6-3, 318, 4.8	Eulless Trinity, TX	BYU
Martin O'Donnell	6-5, 280, 5.4	Downers Grove South, IL	Illinois
Aaron Sears	6-4, 305, 5.0	Russellville, AL	Tennessee
John Sullivan	6-4, 280, 4.9	Greenwich, CT	Notre Dame
Joe Thomas	6-8, 265, 4.78	Brookfield Central, WI	Wisconsin
Eric Young	6-4, 265, 4.7	Union, SC	Tennessee
Jeff Zuttah	6-4, 280, 4.9	Princeton-The Hun School, NJ	Michigan

Defensive Linemen

Victor Abiamiri	6-5, 238, 4.5	Baltimore-Gilman, MD	Notre Dame
Kyle Caldwell	6-3, 265, 4.6	Scottsdale Saguro, AZ	Arizona State
Moe Dampeer	6-3, 275, 4.78	Decatur-MacArthur, IL	Oklahoma
Quentin Groves	6-4, 236, 4.6	Greenville-Weston, MS	Auburn
Jason Jack	6-5, 250, 4.68	Humble, TX	Texas A&M
Lawrence Jackson	6-5, 245, 4.8	Inglewood, CA	USC
Trevor Laws	6-2, 280, 4.8	Apple Valley, MN	Notre Dame
Xavier Lawson-Kennedy	6-3, 300, 4.9	Duncanville, TX	Oklahoma State
Sean Merrill	6-4, 275, 4.79	D'Lebrville, MS	LSU
Jarvis Moss	6-7, 220, 4.48	Denton-Billy Ryan, TX	Florida
Justin Ostrowski	6-5, 250, 4.8	Portage, WI	Wisconsin
John Shaw	6-4, 275, 4.8	Spring Grove, PA	Penn State
Doug Van Dyke	6-4, 246, 4.8	Marshall, MI	Purdue
Justin Warren	6-3, 220, 4.6	Tyler-Lee, TX	Texas A&M
Mario Williams	6-6, 250, 4.57	Richlands, NC	N.C. State

Linebackers

Xavier Adibi	6-3, 215, 4.5	Hampton-Phoebe, VA	Virginia Tech
Levis Baker	6-3, 205, 4.5	Lewisville Hebron, TX	Oklahoma
Daniel Brooks	6-3, 230, 4.6	Jackson Central Merry, TN	Tennessee
Ryan Brown	6-2, 238, 4.5	Moncks Corner-Berkeley, SC	South Carolina
Shawn Crable	6-6, 230, 4.6	Massillon-Washington, OH	Michigan
Tavares Gooden	6-2, 225, 4.5	Ft. Lauderdale-Aquinas, FL	Miami
Wesley Jefferson	6-2, 231, 4.67	Brandywine-Gwynn Park, MD	Maryland
Turk McBride	6-4, 225, 4.5	Camden-Wilson, NJ	Tennessee
Demarrio Pleasant	6-3, 215, 4.5	Lewisville, TX	Oklahoma
Ernie Sims	6-0, 225, 4.5	Tallahassee-N.F.C., FL	Florida State
Fredrick Sparkman	6-3, 220, 4.65	Columbia Central, TN	North Carolina
LaMarr Woodley	6-3, 245, 4.7	Saginaw, MI	Michigan

Defensive Backs

Tarell Brown	6-0, 180, 4.3	N. Mesquite, TX	Texas
Prescott Burgess	6-3, 224, 4.6	Warren Harding, OH	Michigan
Michael Bush	6-3, 225, 4.5	Louisville-Male, KY	Louisville
Tony Cade	6-2, 200, 4.43	Lewisville, TX	Oklahoma
Anton Campbell	6-0, 185, 4.5	O'Fallon Ft. Zumwalt W., MO	Michigan
Antonio Cromartie	6-4, 195, 4.36	Tallahassee-Lincoln, FL	Florida State
Quinton Culbertson	6-1, 210, 4.5	Jackson Provine, MS	Mississippi State
Ryan Mundy	6-2, 205, 4.4	Pittsburgh-Woodland Hills, PA	Michigan
Paul Oliver	5-11, 180, 4.38	Kennesaw-Harrison, GA	Georgia
Ken Scott	6-1, 182, 4.4	Daytona Beach-Sea Breeze, FL	Georgia Tech
Demetrice Webb	6-0, 185, 4.39	Jacksonville-White, FL	Florida
Donte Whitner	5-11, 178, 4.3	Cleveland-Glenville, OH	Ohio State
Ambrose Wooden	6-1, 185, 4.35	Baltimore Gilman, MD	Notre Dame
Tom Zbikowski	6-0, 190, 4.35	Buffalo Grove, IL	Notre Dame

NATIONAL RECRUITING

TOP 100 PLAYERS BY POSITION

Quarterbacks

Blake Barnes	6-3, 215	Baldwyn, MS
Rhett Bomar	6-3, 200	Grand Prairie, TX
John David Booty*	6-3, 190	Shreveport-Evangel, LA
Brian Brohm	6-4, 200	Louisville-Trinity, KY
Chad Henne	6-3, 220	West Lawn-Wilson, PA
Rocky Hinds	6-4, 205	Playa del Rey-St. Bernard's, CA
Xavier Lee	6-4, 205	Daytona Beach-Seabreeze, FL
Sean Lewis	6-7, 210	Oak Lawn-Richards, IL
Stephen McGee	6-3, 195	Burnet, TX
Antonio Miller	6-1, 185	Charlotte-Olympic, NC
Anthony Morelli	6-4, 205	Pittsburgh-Penn Hills, PA
Chase Patton	6-4, 205	Columbia-Rock Bridge, MO
Mike Vlahogorge	6-4, 215	Lafayette-Jefferson, IN
Drew Weatherford	6-4, 195	Land O' Lakes, FL

Running Backs

Kaysonne Anderson	5-11, 175	Manasquan, NJ
George Bell	5-11, 220	Fayetteville-Jack Britt, NC
Brock Bolen	6-1, 240	Germantown-Valley View, OH
Joe Casey	6-1, 205	Paducah-Tilghman, KY
Delbert Ferguson	6-3, 215	Warren-Harding, OH
Peyton Hillis	6-2, 240	Conway, AR
Justin Hoskins	6-0, 195	Grand Rapids-Creston, MI
Terrell Jackson	5-10, 185	Corona-Centennial, CA
Terrell Jackson	6-0, 185	Puckett, MS
Charlie Jones	6-0, 195	Homestead-South Dade, FL
Dwayne Jones	6-1, 220	Toms River North, NJ
Brad Lester	5-11, 175	Lilburn-Parkview, GA
Jay Lucas	6-1, 210	Baton Rouge-Redemptorist, LA
Markus Manson	6-1, 195	Tuscaloosa-Hillcrest, AL
Adrian Peterson	6-2, 215	Palestine, TX
Tony Temple	5-9, 190	Kansas City-Rockhurst, MO
Jamario Thomas	5-11, 190	Longview-Spring Hill, TX
Darius Walker	5-11, 190	Buford, GA
Bobby Washington	6-0, 200	Miami-Killian, FL
Ja'Kouri Williams	5-11, 195	Plaquemine, LA
Raymond Williams	5-11, 180	Cleveland-Benedictine, OH

Wide Receivers

Adrian Arrington	6-3, 175	Cedar Rapids-Washington, IA
Brandon Barrett	6-1, 180	Martinsburg, WI
Xavier Carter	6-3, 185	Melbourne-Palm Bay, FL
Quentin Chaney	6-6, 200	Tulsa-B.T. Washington, OK
Cameron Colvin	6-2, 185	Concord-De La Salle, CA
Fred Davis	6-4, 210	Toledo-Rogers, OH
Lonnell Dewalt	6-7, 215	Bowling Green-Warren Central, KY
Dwayne Jarrett	6-6, 205	New Brunswick, NJ
Calvin Johnson	6-4, 200	Tyrone-Sandy Creek, GA
Derrick Jones	6-0 170	Long Beach Poly, CA
Jordan Shipley	6-0, 175	Burnet, TX
George Walker	6-2, 190	Houston-Westbury, TX

Tight Ends

Kellen Freeman-Davis	6-6, 225	Adrian, MI
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Offensive Linemen

Brian Abraham	6-6, 265	Rancho Cucamonga, CA
Scott Burley	6-5, 325	Woodlawn, MD
Calvin Darity	6-4, 270	Tallahassee-Riverview, FL
Leon Hart	6-4, 285	Columbia-Spring Valley, SC
Jacob Hucko	6-8, 270	Cerritos, CA

100 for 2004

TOP HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Herman Johnson	6-7, 320	Denton High, TX
Micah Jones	6-5, 325	Mayfield, KY
John Kadous	6-6, 315	Tucson-Salpointe Catholic, AZ
Corey Lambert	6-7, 315	Greenville, SC
Drew Miller	6-6, 290	Sarasota-Riverview, FL
Lydon Murtha	6-8, 315	Hutchinson, MN
Seth Olsen	6-5, 300	Millard North, NE
Danny Romanowski	6-4, 280	Baltimore-Dundalk, MD
Walter Thomas	6-5, 330	Galveston-Ball, TX
Seth Watts	6-5, 290	Sandersville-Washington County, GA

Defensive Linemen

Rhyan Anderson	6-6, 265	Oak Creek, WI
Demonte Bolden	6-5, 285	Chattanooga-Tyner Academy, TN
Craig Boker	6-4, 275	Aliquippa-Hopewell, PA
Calais Campbell	6-7, 225	Denver-South, CO
Nick Hayden	6-5, 255	Hartland-Arrowhead, WI
Dwayne Hendricks	6-5, 260	Millville, NJ
Mike Massey	6-5, 240	Cleveland-St. Ignatius, OH
Eric McLendon	6-5, 285	Vidalia, GA
Brandon Nicolas	6-5, 260	Santa Ana-Mater Dei, CA
Franklin Okam	6-5, 310	Richardson-Lake Highlands, TX
Nathan Peterson	6-4, 255	Tulsa-Union, OK
Demario Pressley	6-4, 275	Greensboro-Dudley, NC
A.Q. Shipley	6-3, 275	Coraopolis-Moon Area, PA

Linebackers

Eric Andino	6-4, 220	Buffalo Grove, IL
Jean Beljour	6-0, 210	Hackensack, NJ
Justin Britt	6-4, 245	Cullman, AL
Sam Carson	6-1, 230	Downers Grove South, IL
Dan Connor	6-3, 220	Wallingford-Strath Haven, PA
Marcus Freeman	6-2, 225	Huber-Wayne Hills, OH
Brad Jones	6-4, 215	East Lansing, MI
Dan Lawlor	6-2, 225	Mechanicsburg-Cumberland Valley, PA
Chris Patterson	6-4, 225	Chicago-Hubbard, IL
Keith Rivers	6-3, 230	Lake Mary, FL
Luke Sanders	6-3, 220	West Monroe, LA
Jae Thaxton	6-3, 220	Hartwell-Hart County, GA
Brian Toal	6-2, 220	Ramsey-Don Bosco Prep, NJ
Kyle Williams	6-3, 215	Bolingbrook, IL
Walker Winter	6-5, 230	Kirkland-Juanita, WA

Defensive Backs

Keauntea Bankhead	6-0, 200	Seattle-Ballard, WA
Simeon Castille	6-1, 185	Birmingham-Briarwood Christian, AL
Randy Estes	6-2, 200	Los Alamitos, CA
Ted Ginn, Jr.	6-0, 175	Cleveland-Glennville, OH
Greg Hinds	6-1, 195	Southaven, MS
Kyle Jackson	6-1, 185	Neptune Beach-Fletcher, FL
Andrew Kelson	6-3, 210	Houston-Lamar, TX
Bobby Tatum	6-1, 195	Ft. Worth-Dunbar, TX
Marcus Walker	5-11, 175	Waco, TX

* Booty was attempting this summer to earn early enrollment to Southern California for the fall of 2003.

ACC RECRUITING



North Carolina State

This class started to take shape early in December when superstar RB **Darrell Blackman** and teammate **Ray Brooks** both of Williamsport, PA committed to the Wolfpack. Both have All-American ability, and Blackman gives the Wolfpack quite an RB tandem with T.A. McLendon. Before this pair of blue-chippers committed to NC State, the Wolfpack had already hit the charts by landing another superstar prospect from the Keystone State in the person of QB **Marcus Stone**, a 6-4, 230-pounder with a rifle arm and outstanding running skills. Although NC State did a pretty good job in-state landing DE **Chad Green** (6-6, 220) of Rocky Mount; potential super QB **Chris Hawkins** of Henderson; LB **Ernest Jones** (6-3, 210) of Henderson; OL **Yomi Ojo**, a 6-4, 315-pound OL from Raleigh; DL **Demarcus Tyler** (6-3, 301) of Fayetteville and *Prep Football Report* All-American DE **Mario Williams** (6-6, 250) of Richlands, the reason this class was ranked No. 10 nationally is because of its out-of-state signees.

They are led by the three stars from Pennsylvania. The Wolfpack did their usual great job in Florida, signing such Sunshine State notables as RB **Brian Dennison** (5-11, 195) of Jacksonville; RB **Reggie Davis** (6-2, 220) of Tallahassee; underrated DE **Maurice Charles** (6-3, 225) of Carol City; WR **Lamar Barrett** of Miami Springs; former Texas commitment WR **Jimmie Sutton** of Boca Raton; super quick LB **Stephen Tulloch** of Miami; one of the nation's premier SS prospects **LeRue Rumph** (6-2, 210) of Clearwater, a hard-hitting, quick-footed, smart defender who is one of the top defensive players in Florida; FS **Garland Heath** of Belle Glade and one of the country's top TE prospects **Jamesly Jean** (6-5, 220) of Tampa. A late addition from Florida was one of the south's finest FS prospects in **Miguel Scott** of Miami Killian, a tremendous athlete who can play CB or FS in college. This class was also bolstered by one of the nation's top five offensive line prospects from a year ago, **Derek Morris** (6-6, 360) of Huntersville, NC who signed with Ohio State but left the school after one month in Columbus. If this huge prospect can put it all together at NC State, then look out!

Headliner: Running back Darrell Blackman is the leader of a class of potential offensive superstars. On film, he is one of the most electrifying players in the country. He's a special athlete with All-American ability at both RB and DB. A two-time 1st team all-state running back who also averaged 20 over points per game as a shooting guard in basketball.

Sleeper: Stephen Tulloch is a 5-10, 215-pound linebacker from Miami Killian. He was turned down by several big-name schools in the south because of his height. However, he is a potential difference-maker who gets to the ball like lightning and never misses a tackle. He uses his hands well and is rarely off his feet.

Bottom Line: The Wolfpack did an excellent job instate and an unbelievable job out-of-state, particularly in Pennsylvania and Florida. This is one of the most athletic classes in the country with a number of players who can play several positions.



Florida State

After ten consecutive years of finishing in the top ten, this year's class left Seminole fans downcast. However, it's a class loaded with athletes who blend in nicely with last year's class, which finished 6th nationally. Signing up, once again, with the Seminoles was J.C. All-American **Chauncey Davis**, a 6-2, 260-pound defensive end from

Jones, MS CC, a former *Prep Football Report* All-American LB from central Florida. Also returning are two of last year's top prospects DL **Chris Anderson** (6-3, 295) and TE **Chris Bradwell**, both of Hargrave Military Academy in Virginia. This year Florida State did all of its hunting in Florida and Georgia and bagged several prize catches including one of the country's top PK's in **Chase Goggans** of Douglas, GA; OL **David Overmyer** (6-3, 270) of Lilburn, GA; DL **Andre Fluellen** (6-4, 270) of Cartersville, GA; DE **Alex Boston** (6-3, 225) of Bartow, FL; DL **Clifton Dixon** (6-5, 285) of Miami; WR **DeCody Fagg** (6-3, 185) of Quincy; OL **John Frady** (6-4, 275) of Jacksonville; talented OL **Mario Henderson** (6-6, 330) of Lehigh; TE **D.J. Norris** (6-3, 240) of Pace; DB **Joslin Shaw** of Plant City and All-Area OL **Aubrey McPhadden** (6-6, 320) of Jacksonville. A late catch was talented LB **Anthony Kelly** (6-3, 225) of Daytona Beach. The two players that put the Seminoles into the top 20 were LB **Ernie Sims** (6-0, 220) of Tallahassee, an active, quick LB and a talented RB on offense and the *USA Today* Defensive Player of the Year DB **Antonio Cromartie** (6-3, 200) of Tallahassee Lincoln.

Headliner: Antonio Cromartie caught 30 passes for 642 yds and six TDs on offense while rushing for 242 yds and three TDs on just 12 carries. He also totaled 87 tackles, six picks and returned two kickoffs and three punts back for scores, and is Florida's leading hurdler.

Sleeper: Offensive lineman Mario Henderson has exceptionally long arms, outstanding balance and good strength. If he watches his weight, he could become a dominating OT in college.

Bottom Line: Although this class is not your typical Florida State class, it still consists of some pretty good athletes and a couple of exceptional players. When you add this class to the previous three, the

FRESHMEN of INFLUENCE

DL	Victor Abiamiri	6-5, 238	Baltimore, MD	Notre Dame
LB	Xavier Adibi	6-2, 215	Hampton, VA	Virginia Tech
DB	Chase Anastasio	6-2, 190	Fairfax, VA	Notre Dame
RB	Tramaine Billie	6-1, 195	Columbia, SC	Clemson
DB	Phillip Brown	5-11, 190	Hampton, VA	Virginia
LB	Ryan Brown	6-2, 238	Moncks Corner, SC	South Carolina
OL	Tripp Carroll	6-4, 300	Charlotte, NC	Virginia Tech
TE	Vernon Davis	6-4, 225	Washington DC	Maryland
DL	Chris Ellis	6-5, 235	Hampton, VA	Virginia Tech
QB	C.J. Gaddis	6-1, 205	Raeford, NC	Clemson
LB	Vince Hall	6-0, 235	Chesapeake, VA	Virginia Tech
DL	Marcus Hands	6-6, 245	Wilmington, NC	North Carolina
QB	Chris Hawkins	6-3, 190	Henderson, NC	N.C. State
LB	Wesley Jefferson	6-2, 231	Brandywine, MD	Maryland
WR	Keon Lattimore	5-11, 190	Baltimore, MD	Maryland
QB	Chris Leak	6-0, 210	Charlotte, NC	Florida
TE	Nick Marshman	6-6, 258	Bridgewater, VA	Virginia Tech
WR	Mike Mason	6-0, 180	Rocky Mount, NC	North Carolina
QB	Syvelle Newton	6-2, 210	Bennettsville, SC	South Carolina
RB	Demetris Summers	6-1, 200	Lexington, SC	South Carolina
OL	Isaiah Thomas	6-4, 305	Winston-Salem, NC	North Carolina
DL	Mario Williams	6-6, 250	Richlands, NC	N.C. State
DB	Ambrose Wooden	6-1, 185	Baltimore, MD	Notre Dame
OL	Eric Young	6-4, 265	Union, SC	Tennessee

ACC RECRUITING

Seminoles, along with the Texas Longhorns, are the two most talented teams in the country.



North Carolina

One of the most impressive recruiting jobs this past season was done in Chapel Hill. Recruiting coordinator Rick Steinbacher put together an outstanding game plan and worked it to perfection. He received a couple of good early commitments from All-American QB **Nick Cangelosi** (6-4, 215) of Camden, NJ and super fast **Mike Mason** (6-0, 180) of Rocky Mount, NC, one of that state's top four prospects. The Tar Heels did an outstanding job instate landing such notables as RB **Bryan Bethea** of Fayetteville; outstanding DT **Kyndraus Guy** (6-2, 260) of Southview; *Prep Football Report* All-American DE **Marcus Hands** (6-6, 245) of Wilmington; DB-RB **Quinton Person** (5-11, 175) of Greenville; potential All-American DE **Terry Hunter** (6-4, 245) of Wendell and one of the country's finest OL prospects in **Isaiah Thomas** (6-4, 305) of Winston Salem.

Once again the North Carolina staff did a great job in Virginia, particularly in the Tidewater area where they landed a couple of potential All-Americans at DL, **Khalif Mitchell** (6-6, 285) and **Kenny Price** (6-4, 280), both of Virginia Beach. Tennessee has been coming into North Carolina and taking away a number of prize prospects, but this year the Tar Heels turned the tables landing two of Tennessee's top four prospects in U.S. Army All-American WR **Adarius Bowman** (6-4, 205) of Chattanooga and LB **Fred Sparkman** (6-2, 215) of Columbia. Nick Cangelosi isn't the only Garden State heading south to Chapel Hill. He will be joined by three other prospects from Jersey — 2002 commitment LB **Melik Brown** (6-3, 255) of Camden via Hargrave Military Academy; LB **Joe Kedra** (6-4, 220) of Camden, one of the finest LB prospects in the east; and one of the country's top WR's **Jesse Holley** (6-3, 190) of Roselle. J.C. All-American **Lionell Green** (6-1, 180) of Reedley CC in California should see immediate playing time in the Tar Heel secondary. They also think highly of three Florida recruits QB **Roger Heinz** (6-1, 195) of Tallahassee; LB **Larry Edwards** (6-3, 215) of Tampa and OL **Donnell Livingston** (6-3, 290) of Sarasota.

Headliner: Wide receiver Adarius Bowman from Chattanooga's Notre Dame High School combines great size with outstanding leaping ability. He averaged over 20 yards per catch and high jumped 6'10" in track.

Sleeper: Two-way tackle Donnell Livingston has the quick feet, long arms, quick hands, strength and technique to dominate at OG or DT.

Bottom Line: Coach John Bunting and his staff fought hard for the blue chip athletes they signed. They did remarkably well instate, but this class's strength comes from the coaches' ability to successfully recruit Florida, Tennessee and New Jersey.



Virginia

The Cavaliers picked up where they left off last year recruiting some of the nation's top stars from the south and east. They did their usual great job in New Jersey when they signed WR **Marvin Richardson** (6-4, 219) of Essex, a leaper with great hands; one of the country's finest LB prospects **Jermaine Dias** (6-3, 223) of Hackensack and U.S. Army All-American OL **Gordie Sammis** (6-4, 292) of Somerville. They also did well in Pennsylvania, signing such Keystone notables as DE **Allen Billy** (6-4, 255) of New Castle; one of the nation's top QB prospects **Kevin McCabe** (6-3, 192) of Gibsonia and U.S. Army All-American TE **Jon Stupar** (6-5, 246) of State College, PA. Stupar is a tremendous athlete who has great ability at both TE and DE. Other out-of-state prospects of

note are **Jordy Lipsey**, a 6-3, 272-pounder from Altamonte Springs, FL, one of the country's top two center prospects. One of the most explosive players in the Carolinas is **Emmanuel Byers** of Jamestown, NC, a 5-9, 175-pounder with exceptional moves. Virginia also signed one of the top three OL prospects in Texas and a U.S. Army All-American **Ian-Yates Cunningham** (6-6, 309) from Lewisville, and one of the top three prospects from Tennessee in DE **Vince Redd** (6-7, 250) of Elizabethton.

It was not a great year for talent in Virginia, but the Cavaliers certainly got their share of the state's top players signing two of the top three WR prospects in **Shannon Lane** (6-1, 185) of Virginia Beach and **Fontell Mines** (6-5, 205) of Richmond, a tall, athletic receiver with 4.4 speed. They needed OL prospects and besides Cunningham and Lipsey, Virginia signed huge 6-6, 318-pound **Marshal Ausberry** of Springfield; 6-7, 282-pound **Eddie Pinigis** and Charlottesville's own **Chris Johnson** a 6-6, 265-pounder. Another huge catch was the state's top CB prospect **Philip Brown** (5-11, 190) of Hampton, a 4.3 sprinter with outstanding skills. They are also welcoming back in this class former *USA Today* Defensive Player of the Year LB **Ahmad Brooks** (6-4, 235) who played this past year at Hargrave Military Academy and DT **Keenan Carter** (6-3, 325) of Fork Union Military Academy.

Headliner: For the second year in a row the impact player of this class is LB Ahmad Brooks. He's gotten bigger at 6-4, 235, but still runs a 4.47. Now that he is eligible, Virginia opponents should be quaking in their boots. Ahmad has got terrific lateral speed, outstanding awareness and pro instincts.

Sleeper: Offensive lineman Gordie Sammis is someone to keep your eye on. He was added late to the U.S. Army All-American team as a replacement and he opened a lot of eyes during his week of practice. Coaches were impressed with his quick feet, size, technique, long arms and aggressive attitude.

Bottom Line: The No. 5 class in the country last year and No. 22 this year, Coach Al Groh and his remarkable recruiting staff have squashed all the rumors that last year's recruiting was a fluke. His staff does an excellent job of early contacts and evaluations, and are personable enough to keep just about every prospect interested in the Cavaliers.



Clemson

With all the attention being given to the South Carolina class it's a shame the Tigers did not receive the kind of attention they were due. This class is solid and should rank among the best in the country. The Tigers did a good job instate, but it was their out-of-state recruiting that made the difference. They were able to wrestle potential super RB **Tramaine Billie** (6-1, 195) of Columbia away from South Carolina. They also signed super quick LB **Maurice Nelson** (6-2, 205) of Sumter; DB **Sergio Gilliam** (6-3, 185) of Greer; OL **Marion Dukes** (6-4, 295) of Pickens and PK **Jad Dean** of Greenwood. Another major pickup was QB **C.J. Gaddis** (6-1, 205) of Raeford, NC, one of the most underrated signal-callers in the Atlantic region. WR **Chris Jefferson** (6-2, 175) of Morganton, NC is a good one. The Tigers did a good job in Georgia, landing DB **Robert Reese** (5-11, 185) of Temple and athletic DE **Kwan Williams** (6-3, 220) of Atlanta; TE **Zach Green** (6-6, 240) of Conyers and OL **Brandon Pilgrim** (6-5, 285) of Lilburn.

They went all the way to Texas to land 6-3, 270-pound OL Clint LaTray of Allen, and they also found another outstanding OL in Virginia in Chris McDuffie (6-4, 310) of Danville. A couple of sleepers in this class could be DB Brian Staley of Georgia Military College and little known, but highly productive, RB Brandon Nolen (5-11, 185) of Old Bridge, NJ.

Headliner: Quarterback C.J. Gaddis of Raeford Hoke County is a speedster who ran a 4.39 40 at the North Carolina summer camp.



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ACC RECRUITING

His running skills remind coaches of Michael Vick.

Sleeper: Running back Tramaine Billie is a sleeper. He's the state sprint champion who is a productive RB. He could wind up being moved to the WR-DB positions and also may play as a true freshman for the Tigers as a kickoff returner.

Bottom Line: This is one of the fastest classes in the country. They seem to have recruited speed at every position and Coach Tommy Bowden filled his needs at RB, DL, LB and DB.



Maryland

Despite a slow finish, this wound up being a good class. The Terrapins put a lot of emphasis on recruiting locally, and this season they came up big. Area stars heading to College Park are all-everything two-way tackle **Conrad Bolston** (6-4, 267) of Washington D.C.; one of the country's top receivers TE **Vernon Davis** (6-4, 225) of Washington D.C.; super fast, athletic WR **Keon Lattimore** of Baltimore; QB **Ryan Mitch** of Hyattsville, a 6-3, 201-pounder with a live arm; WR **Drew Weatherly** (6-4, 200) of Georgetown; and one of the nation's top three linebackers in **Wesley Jefferson** (6-2, 231) of Brandywine. Maryland also did a good job around the rest of the east landing TB **Lance Ball** (5-9, 220) of Teaneck, NJ and a couple of OL prospects from Pennsylvania in **Brock Choate** (6-6, 275) of Montoursville and *Prep Football Report* All-American **Brandon Nixon** (6-6, 325) of Pottstown. A sleeper is C **Robert Jenkins** (6-2, 300) of Nassau CC in New York. The Terps are also high on prep school standout **Robert Armstrong**, a 6-4, 300-pound DT from Fork Union, VA. Maryland also got some help with the signings of OL **Donnie Woods** (6-5, 285) from the productive Tampa Jefferson High and his teammate LB **Jermaine Lemons** (6-3, 230). Another major catch was hard-hitting **Tim Cesa** (6-2, 235), a LB from Kennesaw, GA.

Headliner: Linebacker Wesley Jefferson of Brandywine Gwynn Park, MD ranks as the No. 28 prospect in the country and recorded 163 tackles, 13 sacks and 39 tackles for losses from his ILB position.

Sleeper: Linebacker Tim Cesa is remarkably quick to the ball and has been blessed with great strength, tremendous instincts and a love for the game.

Bottom Line: Although this class at one stage was close to a top 10 ranking, it still gives the Terrapins much needed depth, especially along the offensive and defensive lines.



Duke

The Blue Devils, being an academic school, had to recruit just about every state east of the Mississippi and came up with several top-notch prospects including super fast, talented RB **Aaron Fryer** (5-11, 205) of Tampa Jesuit, FL, one of that state's top RB prospects; LB **Alexander Williams** (6-0, 215), a 4.4 sprinter from Dublin, GA; All-State LB **Corey Sobel** (6-0, 200) from Hyattsville, MD, who plays for the storied program DeMatha; OL **Zach Maurides** (6-6, 250) of Glenbrook, IL; DB **Cedric Mason** (6-0, 185) of College Park, GA; talented DB **Jeremy Edwards** (6-0, 175) of Jackson, NJ; super sleeper DE **Casey Camero** (6-5, 235) of Tampa Jesuit; WR **Deon Adams** (6-2, 190) of Greensboro, NC; one of the top three prospects in West Virginia in **Nick Stefanow** (6-3, 215) of Wheeling; DB **John Talley** (5-11, 170) of Duncan, SC; DB **Brandon Tapps** (5-11, 185) of Garland, TX and athletic DE **Chris Moore** (6-6, 240) of St. Paul, MN.

Headliner: Running back Aaron Fryer is just what the doctor ordered for the Blue Devils. He's a strong kid with great vision, balance and excellent speed. He has averaged over eight yards per carry.

Sleeper: Defensive end Chris Moore of St Paul St. Thomas Academy in Minnesota was rated as one of the top seven prospects in Minnesota. He's an active, instinctive defender whose father Melvin Moore played three years for the Minnesota Vikings. Chris has the frame to weigh close to 280 in college.

Bottom Line: This just might be the best class the Blue Devils have brought in over the past five years. They signed athletes in just about every position and got the RB, WR and DB prospects they were looking for.



Georgia Tech

This may be the best recruiting year in ACC history, as evidenced by the fact that Georgia Tech is ranked low in the conference, yet Coach Chan Gailey and his staff did an excellent job in filling just about every position they were looking to fill. They recruited almost entirely in the south and had great success, particularly in Florida landing PFR All-American CB **Kenny Scott** (6-1, 175) of Daytona Beach; QB **Pat Carter** (6-3, 185) of St. Petersburg; RB **Rashaun Grant** (5-11, 190) of Tampa; WR **Chris Dunlap** (6-0, 185) of Miramar and NG **Lashawn Newberry**, a 6-0, 310-pounder from Port Orange. In-staters heading to Atlanta are FS **Avery Roberson** (6-2, 190) of Atlanta; QB **Reggie Ball** of Stone Mountain (6-0, 180) and FS **Joe Gaston** (6-0, 200) of Marietta.

Headliner: DB Ken Scott led his team to an 11-1 record this past season. He totaled 39 tackles, two picks and broke up 11 passes. He has also been timed at 10.6 for 100 meters.

Sleeper: Quarterback Patrick Carter has enormous potential as a signal-caller. This past season he led Lakewood to the state semi-finals of the 4A regionals by passing for over 2,000 yds and 18 TDs while rushing for 330 yds and seven touchdowns.

Bottom Line: The Yellow Jackets top five prospects are as good as any school's in the conference. This is one of the most athletic classes they have signed in recent years. Several should contribute as true freshman.



Wake Forest

Demon Deacons Coach Jim Grobe recruits athletes that fit his system and does an excellent job of it. Some of this year's top prospects are QB **Bruce Hall** (6-0, 185) of Milton, FL, a tremendous ball-handler with outstanding running skills; LB **John Abbate** (5-10, 240) of Kennesaw, GA; OL **Steve Justice** (6-4, 275) of New Smyrna Beach, FL; WR **Kevin Marion**, a super speedster from St. Petersburg, FL; TB **Micah Andrews**, an All-State RB from Norcross, GA; LB **DeAngelo Bryant** (6-2, 215) of Silver Bluff, SC; LB **Matt Robinson** (6-2, 225) of Cedartown, GA; LB **James Martin** (6-2, 225) of Pompano Beach, FL; DE **Zac Selmon** (6-5, 231) of Norman, OK; CB **Devon Blake** (5-11, 170) of Jacksonville, FL; CB **Kenny Moore** (5-11, 170) of Matthews, NC and All-Kentucky OL **Brodie Overstreet** (6-6, 275) of Danville, KY.

Headliner: OL Brodie Overstreet is a two-way lineman who should wind up playing either OT or OG. This Kentucky All-Stater has remarkably quick feet, great growth potential and plays aggressively.

Sleeper: Quarterback Bruce Hall is just what the doctor ordered for the Demon Deacon offense. He has a deceptively strong arm, outstanding ball handling skills and excellent football speed.

Bottom Line: This Demon Deacon class is devoid of All-Americans, but is quick, aggressive, smart and competitive.

— Tom Lemming, *Prep Football Report*

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ACC

Picking the ACC

The Favorite? Nope, Guess Again!

Over the past two seasons his teams have won 21 games — three more than any other Atlantic Coast Conference program — captured a conference championship and routed a perennial SEC power in a bowl game.

His program has produced 15 first-team All-ACC selections — more than double its closest competitor — one league MVP, two defensive players of the year and one offensive player of the year.

The accolades have been so plentiful that Florida State coach Bobby Bowden can do little more than tip his hat ... and congratulate Maryland coach Ralph Friedgen.

It has been a wonderful two-year ride for Friedgen and the Terrapins, and by the looks of things, one that is just beginning. With 16 starters and a league-high 58 lettermen returning, Maryland is poised to build on its recent success.

"The last two years, we've maximized our potential because we've played together as a team and played unselfishly," Friedgen said.

"I think we have more potential than ever before."

The potential for an ACC title run, however, isn't limited to the Terrapins. North Carolina State, coming off a school-record 11-3 campaign, is 18-8 over the past two seasons, second only to Maryland (21-5). Virginia pieced together an impressive 9-5 mark in coach Al Groh's second season and has put together consecutive stellar recruiting classes.

And then there is Florida State, which remains the measuring stick for ACC greatness after winning its 10th conference title in 11 years despite a 9-5 overall record in 2002.

For only the second time in its 50 years, the ACC finished a football season with four programs ranked in the Top 25. The only prior occasion for that feat was 1992 — the year FSU joined the league.

"With the emergence of Florida State in the league, it has pushed everybody up to survive and improve," said N.C.

State coach Chuck Amato, a longtime FSU assistant.

While offseason conversation along Tobacco Road has centered on the ACC's plan to expand to a 12-team league, the league has never been in better shape heading into a season.

Not only is the league anticipating the first legitimate four-team title race, but Wake Forest, Clemson and Georgia Tech comprise a solid second tier.

"I don't think you can say we're a basketball league anymore," Friedgen said.

In fact, you can make a strong argument that ACC football has risen — at least temporarily — above the beloved indoor game.

Seven ACC schools reached bowl games last season, while its basketball brethren failed to advance a single team to the Elite Eight round of the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament for the first time since 1979.

"In the bowl games last year, two of the more storied names (Notre Dame and Tennessee) were beaten soundly by ACC

ACC Picks

	GOOD NEWS	BAD NEWS	OUR CALL
1. Maryland	QB Scott McBrien is light years ahead of last year. Defense is nasty.	Soft non-conference schedule could prove costly in BCS rankings.	A third year in a row of exceeding expectations? That's good coaching.
2. Florida State	QB Chris Rix has ample playmakers; veteran defense reduces the pressure.	Building chemistry is critical, but 10 projected starters missed spring.	Tough schedule and off-field distractions require Bowden's best effort.
3. N. C. State	Pack returns 5,000-yard trio in fine passer, rusher, receiver.	League-leading defense lost five of starting front seven to graduation.	Might have FSU's number, but beating Maryland remains problematic.
4. Virginia	QB Matt Schaub tops 17 returning starters for upstart Cavs.	Cavs can't continue to win without a running game.	Al Groh has assembled title talent and now must develop that attitude.
5. Wake Forest	Jim Grobe has laid quality groundwork.	Run-oriented Deacs lost eight offensive starters and must rely on youth.	Bowl rout of Oregon provided momentum; veteran defense will sustain it.
6. Clemson	QB Charlie Whitehurst has ACC's top receiving corps at his disposal.	Offensive line is a wreck (again) and defense is retooling ... yet again.	It'll take more than seven wins to keep wolves from Tommy Bowden's door.
7. Georgia Tech	Both lines are manned by veterans, which is always a good sign.	RB Tony Hollings and nine others bombed out in the classroom.	If mobile QB Damarius Bilbo matures fast, Bees could still make noise.
8. North Carolina	QB Darian Durant goes to work behind five returning O-line starters.	Brutal early schedule will make it difficult to gauge improvement.	ACC's worst defense has to be improved with experience ... doesn't it?
9. Duke	League-high 22 starters are back from team that lost five close games.	No one on the roster has played in a league win (25-game ACC streak).	Close doesn't get it done; must win close ones to keep Carl Franks around.

**MOST VALUABLE
PLAYER**

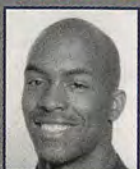

Philip Rivers
QB, N.C. State

**OFFENSIVE
PLAYER
OF THE YEAR**


Matt Schaub
QB, Virginia

**DEFENSIVE
PLAYER
OF THE YEAR**


Michael Boulware
LB, Florida State

**NEWCOMER
OF THE YEAR**


Lorenzo Booker
RB, Florida State

schools," Groh said, acknowledging postseason triumphs by N.C. State and Maryland. "Everybody in this league is a tough out."

The Cavaliers certainly were in 2002, rallying to three fourth-quarter victories behind quarterback Matt Schaub, who earned Offensive Player of the Year honors. Schaub passed for 2,976 yards and 28 touchdowns, despite directing the ACC's worst offense.

Even with his award-winning campaign, Schaub earned "most improved" honors during spring drills. That's an imposing honor when you consider the Cavaliers will return 19 starters, including four offensive linemen and eight defensive players who learned how to win last season.

Amato's Wolfpack certainly has the offensive arsenal capable of following up last year's run. In fourth-year senior starting quarterback Philip Rivers, senior receiver Jerricho Cotchery and sophomore tailback T.A. McLendon, State is the first ACC program to return a 3,000-yard passer,

1,000-yard receiver and 1,000-yard rusher in the same season.

N.C. State is the only conference school with three wins over Florida State, and will likely need to top the Seminoles for a third consecutive year if they are to improve on last season's 5-3 ACC record.

Though FSU has lost three league games over the past two seasons — after going 70-2 against ACC schools in their first nine years of conference play — Bowden's team isn't about to quietly retire to second-tier status.

FSU returns 10 defensive starters, and since the schedule requires Maryland and N.C. State to visit Tallahassee, the 'Noles should be poised to defend their title.

Ample depth and talent throughout the league, however, will expose the contenders to upsets. In addition to returning a league-record 141 starters — including eight of nine quarterbacks — 12 of the ACC's 16 individual statistical leaders also return.

Lindy's 2003 ALL-ACC TEAM

OFFENSE – First Team

QB	Philip Rivers	Sr.	N.C. State
RB	T.A. McLendon	So.	N.C. State
RB	Greg Jones	Sr.	Florida State
WR	Jerricho Cotchery	Sr.	N.C. State
WR	Kevin Youngblood	Sr.	Clemson
TE	Heath Miller	So.	Virginia
C	Hugh Reilly	Sr.	Georgia Tech
OL	Elton Brown	Jr.	Virginia
OL	Lamar Bryant	Sr.	Maryland
OL	Nat Dorsey	Jr.	Georgia Tech
OL	Chris Colmer	Sr.	N.C. State
AP	Steve Suter	Jr.	Maryland
PK	Nick Novak	Jr.	Maryland

DEFENSE – First Team

DL	Greg Gathers	Sr.	Georgia Tech
DL	Eric Moore	Jr.	Florida State
DL	Randy Starks	Jr.	Maryland
DL	Kevin Emanuel	Sr.	Florida State
LB	Michael Boulware	Sr.	Florida State
LB	Leon Joe	Sr.	Maryland
LB	Darryl Blackstock	So.	Virginia
DB	Justin Miller	So.	Clemson
DB	Domonique Foxworth	Jr.	Maryland
DB	Madiou Williams	Sr.	Maryland
DB	Dexter Reid	Sr.	North Carolina
P	Ryan Plackemeier	So.	Wake Forest

OFFENSE – Second Team

QB	Matt Schaub	Sr.	Virginia
RB	Bruce Perry	Sr.	Maryland
RB	Alex Wade	Sr.	Duke
WR	Jonathan Smith	Sr.	Georgia Tech
WR	Derrick Hamilton	Jr.	Clemson
TE	Bobby Blizzard	Sr.	North Carolina
C	Kevin Bailey	Sr.	Virginia
OL	C.J. Brooks	Jr.	Maryland
OL	Tyson Clabo	Sr.	Wake Forest
OL	Mike Moroz	Sr.	Wake Forest
OL	Ray Willis	Jr.	Florida State
AP	Leon Washington	So.	Florida State
PK	Xavier Beitia	Jr.	Florida State

DEFENSE – Second Team

DL	Chris Canty	Jr.	Virginia
DL	Terrance Chapman	Sr.	N.C. State
DL	Matt Zielinski	Sr.	Duke
DL	Darnell Dockett	Sr.	Florida State
LB	Kendyll Pope	Sr.	Florida State
LB	Ryan Fowler	Sr.	Duke
LB	John Leake	Sr.	Clemson
DB	Stanford Samuels	Sr.	Florida State
DB	Almondo Curry	Sr.	Virginia
DB	Andre Maddox	Jr.	N.C. State
DB	Quintin Williams	Sr.	Wake Forest
P	Trey McDonald	Jr.	Duke

Honor Roll

Most Accurate Passer

Strongest Arm

Best Scrambler

Coolest in the Clutch

Toughest to Bring Down

Best Hands

Most Dangerous Deep Threat

Best Pass Blocker

Best Run Blocker

Best Cover Corner

Special Teams Demon

Matt Schaub

Chris Rix

Darian Durant

Philip Rivers

Greg Jones

Kevin Youngblood

Jerricho Cotchery

Chris Colmer

Lamar Bryant

Justin Miller

Leon Washington

Virginia

Florida State

North Carolina

N.C. State

Florida State

Clemson

N.C. State

Maryland

Clemson

Florida State

The BIG Ones

AUGUST 30

Georgia at Clemson
Wake Forest at Boston College

Tigers eye revenge and a good start for Tommy Bowden.
Opportunity for Deacs to build on offseason momentum.

SEPTEMBER 6

Maryland at Florida State
Auburn at Georgia Tech
Virginia at South Carolina

Terps have not forgotten costly loss here in 2001.
Jackets' run defense will get an early test.
Cavs turned last season with win over Gamecocks.

SEPTEMBER 13

N.C. State at Ohio State
Purdue at Wake Forest

National champs provide 'Pack with high-stakes test.
Deacs get rare home shot at Big Ten opponent.

SEPTEMBER 20

Clemson at Georgia Tech
Colorado at Florida State
North Carolina at Wisconsin
Texas Tech at N.C. State

Tigers and Jackets usually take it to the wire.
'Noles will know if they are title contenders after this one.
Road test a good barometer for rebuilding Tar Heels.
Teams combined for 99 points, 1,000 yards last season.

OCTOBER 4

N.C. State at Georgia Tech

Jackets' lone quality win last season against Pack

OCTOBER 11

Miami (Fla.) at Florida State

Canes have won three straight in series; four will be chore.

OCTOBER 18

Florida State at Virginia

Cavaliers hope to repeat historic '95 feat in Charlottesville.

OCTOBER 23

Maryland at Georgia Tech

This game has become a Thursday night fixture.

NOVEMBER 1

Florida State at Notre Dame
Virginia at N.C. State

Do 'Noles stand a prayer on All Saints Day?
One team's ACC title hopes will be dashed here.

NOVEMBER 13

Virginia at Maryland

Shelled by Cavs in '02, Terps are ready to ride.

NOVEMBER 15

N.C. State at Florida State

After two straight losses, 'Noles need cathartic win.

NOVEMBER 22

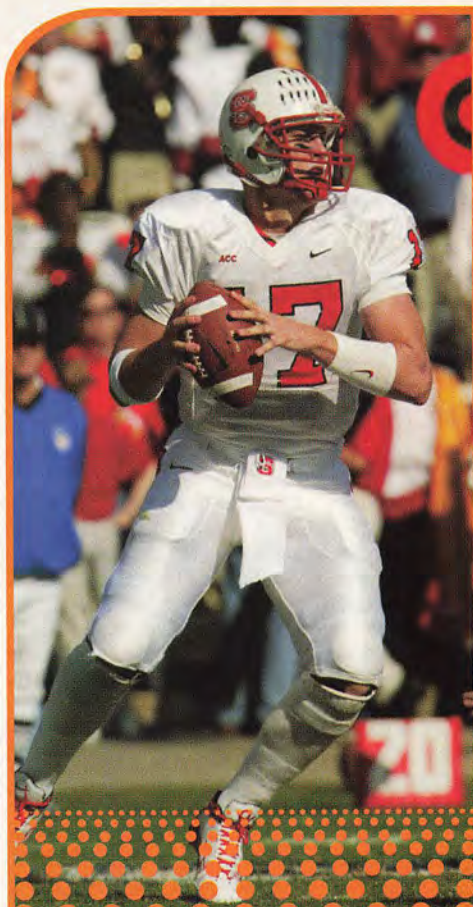
Clemson at South Carolina
Georgia at Georgia Tech
Maryland at N.C. State

Might this be Tommy Bowden's last stand?
Dawgs eye start of dominant run vs. rivals.
Beginning to wonder if Amato can beat Friedgen.

NOVEMBER 29

Florida State at Florida
Virginia Tech at Virginia
Maryland at Wake Forest

Zook won recruiting war, but can he beat 'Noles?
Cavaliers seek changing of guard in Commonwealth.
Last league game of season could decide it all.



FOURTH-YEAR SENIOR STARTING
QUARTERBACK PHILIP RIVERS LEADS
THE WOLFPACK.

PHOTO BY BRUCE SCHWARTZMAN

BOWL CONNECTIONS

ACC champ	BCS
	(Sugar if ranked #1 or #2)
ACC #2	Gator vs. Big East #2
ACC #3	Peach vs. SEC #4-5
ACC #4-5	Tangerine vs. Big 12 #5-7
ACC #4-5	Continental Tire vs. Big East #3-5

Top 10 NFL Talent

1. Greg Jones	RB	Florida State	Sr.	Physical specimen packs punishing punch.
2. Michael Boulware	LB	Florida State	Sr.	Speedy and smart, projects as a safety.
3. Jericho Cotchery	WR	N.C. State	Sr.	A breakaway threat with soft hands.
4. Matt Schaub	QB	Virginia	Sr.	Is benefiting from an NFL coaching approach.
5. Randy Starks	DT	Maryland	Jr.	Athletic giant may be best you've never heard about.
6. Justin Miller	CB	Clemson	So.	Blazer isn't afraid to take chances to make plays.
7. T.A. McLendon	RB	N.C. State	So.	Maturity will answer durability questions.
8. Leon Joe	LB	Maryland	Sr.	Playmaker no longer in E.J. Henderson's shadow.
9. Darnell Dockett	DT	Florida State	Sr.	A terror on the field who could move to DE.
10. Philip Rivers	QB	N.C. State	Sr.	Consummate winner has arm strength issues.

Around the ACC

Anticipating Something Special

Great anticipation. That should be the theme to the 2003 Atlantic Coast Conference football season, where four Top 25 teams from a year ago prepare to stake their claim in a league race that could be the deepest and most entertaining in its 51-year history.

And there's no reason to think the league won't just keep on getting better, particularly with expansion on the horizon.

With the league finding recruiting success up and down the Eastern Seaboard, Florida State no longer has a free pass to the Bowl Championship Series. But it's not just new, improved, big and fast players who are making the big difference in the ACC.

There's the old, beat-up guys, too. Such as the two primary candidates for the Brian Piccolo Award, presented to the ACC player who has overcome the greatest odds.

A couple of tailbacks — Florida State's Greg Jones and Maryland's Bruce Perry had not even expected to be in college ball these days. They were supposed to be high draft choices by now. But injuries have a way of changing those kinds of plans.

For Jones it was a torn ACL last season, derailing him just before he could become the first FSU player to gain 1,000 yards since 1996. He was at 968 yards midway through the 10th game of the year at Wake Forest when he suffered the injury.

Then there is Perry, the 2001 ACC Offensive Player of the Year, whose torn groin virtually kept him out of the lineup until the final four games of the 2002 season. On the heels of a 1,242-yard campaign for the league-champion Terrapins, Perry finished with 341 yards, though he was nearly forgotten in the wake of Chris Downs'

1,194-yard campaign.

The prognosis for Jones' complete recovery in time for the season opener is outstanding, while Perry should be fine.

At 100 percent, both are worthy of mention in Heisman Trophy conversation. Likewise, they would significantly bolster the ACC title and postseason aspirations of their respective clubs.

While there is a marquee quality to the comeback bids of the tailbacks, the healthy return of 2001 Georgia Tech All-American defensive end Greg Gathers, and Virginia offensive lineman Kevin Bailey, are equally critical to their teams.

Gathers is recovering from a kidney ailment that sapped his strength and sacked his season after three games last year. Bailey, a natural center who was playing tackle, suffered a season-ending knee injury in the Cavaliers' second game of the year (at FSU).

Another outstanding offensive talent — Georgia Tech tailback Tony Hollings — was ready for a comeback, too, after missing most of last season with a knee injury. Until he was hurt, all he was doing was leading the nation in rushing ... but in the springtime, academic woes leveled him again. Hollings is out for the season.

Changing times in Tallahassee

Bobby Bowden's accommodating personality, particularly with the media, played no small role in Florida State's rise to national prominence. Through his first 27 seasons in Tallahassee, Bowden seldom said "no" to the media, providing unmatched access to players and coaches.

While it took talent — loads of it — for the Seminoles to put

Four-Year Standings

Yes, the rest of the league is rising in Florida State's direction, but let's not get carried away. The fifth-year seniors in Tallahassee have won three ACC titles, been to four bowls (including three BCS games) and are 29-3 against the rest of the league. Compare that to the rest of the league, with no team more than six games over .500 in league games over those same four seasons.

What's most interesting is that three teams are tied for the second-best ACC record from 1999 to 2002 ... and those teams are not the two hottest teams in the league — Maryland and N.C. State.

TEAM	ACC	Pct.	All	Pct	C	BCS	B	Comment
Florida State	29-3	.906	40-11	.784	3	3	4	The Seminoles continue to set the standard.
Georgia Tech	19-13	.594	32-18	.640	0	0	4	Bees dropped a step last year; is it a trend?
Clemson	19-13	.594	29-20	.592	0	0	4	Tigers seem to be running in place.
Virginia	19-13	.594	27-23	.540	0	0	3	Al Groh's pro-oriented approach is working.
Maryland	18-14	.563	31-17	.646	1	1	2	This Fridge has the Terps sizzling hot.
N.C. State	16-16	.500	32-18	.640	0	0	3	Taking the FSU approach into the future?
North Carolina	11-21	.344	20-27	.426	0	0	1	Heels hit rock bottom (1-7) in 2002.
Wake Forest	10-22	.313	22-25	.468	0	0	2	Wake players bowling more than UNC's.
Duke	3-29	.094	5-40	.111	0	0	0	Devils seem to be closer to breakthrough.

Note: C=ACC Championship or co-championship; BCS=BCS bowl; B=Bowls

together their unprecedented string of 14 consecutive 10-win seasons with top-five poll finishes, it didn't hurt that the media spotlight brought unprecedented exposure to the once downtrodden independent program.

The glare of that spotlight, however, grew too bright last season. For the first time in his tenure, Bowden closed spring practice to the media, and is strongly considering closing the FSU locker room after games for the first time as well.

Those decisions were made after the Seminoles were buried under an avalanche of bad press that began with quarterback Adrian McPherson's November arrest and subsequent dismissal for a stolen, forged and cashed check from a local business. That arrest sparked a three-month investigation into gambling, which brought another charge against McPherson. The poor decision-making continued over the next few weeks when quarterback Chris Rix (sleeping through a final exam) and defensive tackle Darnell Dockett (orchestrating a deep-discounted purchase of sports apparel) were suspended for the Sugar Bowl.

Not lost in the aftermath, the change in policy comes 10 years after the Seminoles won the first of two national championships, but received a black eye because of the "Foot Locker" agent scandal. In the aftermath of that flap, Bowden closed fall practice to the media for the first time.

Time to trim scheduling fat

For years, the ACC's reputation — not counting Florida State — has taken a beating for its non-conference scheduling, and last season was no exception. N.C. State posted the first 11-win season in its school history, but three of those triumphs came against East Tennessee State, Navy and UMass. Maryland secured its first 11-win season since 1976 while whipping up on Akron, Eastern Michigan and Wofford.

This year's non-conference softies for the Terps include Northern Illinois, The Citadel and Eastern Michigan, in addition to annual foe West Virginia. Meanwhile, N.C. State has upgraded with the addition of defending national champion Ohio State to a schedule that includes Western Carolina, Texas Tech and UConn.

While the rest of the league is hesitant to schedule the way FSU does — the 'Noles face Colorado, Miami, Notre Dame, and Florida —

at least every team has one bonafide non-conference challenge on its 12-game slate.

North Carolina is next in line with games against Syracuse, Wisconsin and Arizona State. Clemson opens with Georgia; Duke travels to Tennessee; Georgia Tech plays host to Auburn; Virginia visits South Carolina; and Wake Forest tackles Boston College and Purdue.

OC Turnover Abundant

While teams generally take their personality cue from the head coach, offensive coordinators are close behind. For that reason, the 2003 season bears a little extra attention to play-calling as five new offensive coordinators prepare for their ACC debuts.

- Noel Mazzone moves to N.C. State from Oregon State, replacing Marty Galbraith to become Chuck Amato's third offensive coordinator in four years.

- Ron Prince was promoted to offensive coordinator at Virginia, after Bill Musgrave returned to the NFL with Jacksonville.

- Duke head coach Carl Franks finally relinquished his play-calling responsibilities, promoting quarterbacks coach Jim Pry.

- At Wake Forest, Steed Lobotzke steps in for Troy Calhoun, who has moved on to the NFL.

- Georgia Tech coach Chan Gailey has taken a different approach in replacing Bill O'Brien, who was reunited with Ralph Friedgen at Maryland. Returning assistant Patrick Nix will coordinate the Yellow Jackets' running game, while Buddy Geis joins the staff as the passing game coordinator.

Scoring at the turnstiles

For the second consecutive season the ACC established a pair of attendance records in 2002. League teams drew 2.9 million to its 58 home games in 2002, shattering the '01 total attendance mark of 2.7 million.

But don't chalk the total attendance figure up to the first 12-game schedule. In its 50th season of football, ACC schools averaged more than 50,000 fans per game for the first time. The per-game average of 50,775 nipped the '01 record of 49,673.

— Bob Thomas

ACC in the 2003 NFL Draft

OK, so you say that Wake Forest had as many players drafted by the NFL as North Carolina and N.C. State combined? Yup, and that includes the one and only first-round draft choice from the ACC (DE Calvin Pace). At any rate, Florida State has largely dominated the ACC recruiting battles, which 4-5 years later translates into how and why the Seminoles are the ACC team that dominates the NFL Draft.

Rnd/Pick	Clemson	Pos	NFL Team
4 (114)	Nicholas Eason	DT	Denver
4 (128)	Bryant McNeal	DE	Denver

Rnd/Pick	Florida State	Pos	NFL Team
2 (54)	*Anquan Boldin	WR	Arizona
2 (59)	Alonzo Jackson	DE	Pittsburgh
4 (102)	Montrae Holland	G	New Orleans
4 (113)	Brett Williams	OT	Kansas City
7 (225)	Todd Williams	G	Tennessee
7 (231)	Talman Gardner	WR	New Orleans

Rnd/Pick	Maryland	Pos	NFL Team
2 (40)	E.J. Henderson	ILB	Minnesota

Rnd/Pick	North Carolina	Pos	NFL Team
4 (127)	Sam Aiken	WR	Buffalo

Rnd/Pick	North Carolina State	Pos	NFL Team
5 (137)	Terrence Holt	FS	Detroit
7 (215)	Scott Kooistra	OT	Cincinnati

Rnd/Pick	Virginia	Pos	NFL Team
3 (94)	Angelo Crowell	ILB	Buffalo
3 (95)	Billy McMullen	WR	Philadelphia

Rnd/Pick	Wake Forest	Pos	NFL Team
1 (18)	Calvin Pace	DE	Arizona
4 (134)	Ovie Mughelli	FB	Baltimore
7 (230)	Montique Sharpe	DT	Kansas City

* Junior

Rating the ACC

Almost Everyone Has Reason to Brag

QUARTERBACKS

1. N.C. State
2. Virginia
3. Florida State
4. Maryland
5. North Carolina
6. Clemson
7. Georgia Tech
8. Duke
9. Wake Forest

Fourth-year North Carolina State starter Philip Rivers is on his way to rewriting the ACC record book, entering his senior season with 8,993 passing yards (fifth all-time) and 61 touchdown passes (third). Along the way, he's managed to reinvent himself every season.

Heady and tough, with a quick release and a deft touch, he spent last season dispelling myths that he couldn't throw downfield (career-best 12.8 yards per completion) and wasn't particularly mobile (10 rushing TDs).

Numbers alone should put Rivers at the top of the quarterback class, but he is one of eight returning starters, including Virginia's Matt Schaub, the reigning ACC Player of the Year. Schaub overcame an early-season benching to pass for 2,976 yards and a league-best 28 TDs (with only seven interceptions), and his 68.9 completion percentage ranked second in Division I-A.

Florida State junior Chris Rix, perhaps the most physically gifted quarterback, must regain his teammates' faith after a tumultuous sophomore season. Though he's passed for 4,421 yards and 37 TDs in 22 career starts, improved decision-making (on and off the field) will determine his legacy.

Clemson has shortcomings everywhere ... except receiver. Kevin Youngblood, Derrick Hamilton and Airese Currie accounted for 127 receptions, 1,475 yards and seven TDs last season.

N.C. State's Jericho Cotchery is in a league of his own among returning receivers, and the big-play senior can't help but prosper with the emergence of Sterling Hicks and Dovonte Edwards as complementary components. Freshman Richard Washington should also find room in the rotation.

Georgia Tech's depth isn't quite as proven, but play-making Jonathan Smith and Levon Thomas give the Yellow Jackets a potent 1-2 punch. Sophomore Lekeldrick Bridges came on late in the season, while classmate Nate Curry, who missed last season with an injury, reminds some of graduated standout Kerry Watkins.

It's a rare season when FSU doesn't have an established threat in place, but no one will be surprised if Craphonso Thorpe, P.K. Sam and/or Dominic Robinson emerge. Thorpe, the ACC's sprint champion, has unlimited upside. So does redshirt freshman Chris Davis, who might eventually turn out to be a faster version of Peter Warrick.

RUNNING BACKS

1. Florida State
2. Wake Forest
3. Maryland
4. N.C. State
5. Virginia
6. Duke
7. Georgia Tech
8. Clemson
9. North Carolina

Florida State senior tailback Greg Jones will likely be in the best shape of his life when returns this fall fully recovered from ACL reconstruction. At 6-foot-1 and 248 pounds, Jones' downhill running style packed plenty of attitude last season, as he piled up 938 yards in 8 1/2 games.

Jones' larger-than-life stature was enough to scare off a pair of teammates the past two seasons, and send a third to receiver. The Seminoles, however, are hardly shy on talent. Sophomore Leon Washington, who rushed for 134 yards against Florida, is being pushed by jet-quick redshirt freshman Lorenzo Booker.

There's no mistaking Wake Forest's commitment to the running game on the heels of consecutive seasons as the league's top rushing offense. Chris Barclay, Nick Burney and Cornelius Birgs combined for 1,375 yards in backup roles last season, and Fred Staton returns after amassing 703 yards in 2001.

Maryland's Bruce Perry will be trying to regain the form he showed while winning the 2001 ACC Player of the Year award before suffering through an injury-filled 2002.

OFFENSIVE LINE

1. Maryland
2. Georgia Tech
3. Virginia
4. Wake Forest
5. Florida State
6. Duke
7. N.C. State
8. North Carolina
9. Clemson

A league-wide upgraded athleticism along the offensive line is directly related to the ACC's overall improvement.

Maryland has made the greatest strides in this area, and with the return of guards Lamar Bryant and Kevin Brooks, along with tackle Eric Dumas, the Terps should be able to overcome the loss of Todd Wike and Matt Crawford.

The Yellow Jackets return three starters, including All-American candidate left tackle Nat Dorsey, third-year starting center Hugh Reilly and talented left guard Leon Robinson. Virginia, however, may prove to be in the best shape of all if Kevin Bailey returns from a season-ending injury and solidifies the center position. Sophomore tackle D'Brickashaw Ferguson and junior guard Elton Brown are all-league quality.

Wake Forest returns only three starters on offense — all of them grunts. Tackle Matt Moroz and guard Tyson Clabo, seniors, are certifiable road-graders in the Deacs' misdirection offense, and center Blake Lungren provides the middle anchor.

While FSU was decimated by the graduation of four starters, junior tackles Ray Willis and Alex Barron have the potential to be the best set of bookends in the conference.

RECEIVERS

1. Clemson
2. N.C. State
3. Georgia Tech
4. Florida State
5. Maryland
6. Virginia
7. North Carolina
8. Duke
9. Wake Forest

The best way to defense eight returning starting quarterbacks is with seasoned defensive backs, and there are plenty to go around in the ACC.

DEFENSIVE LINE

1. Florida State
2. Georgia Tech
3. Maryland
4. Virginia
5. North Carolina
6. Duke
7. N.C. State
8. Clemson
9. Wake Forest

FSU's talent up front is head-and-shoulders above the rest ... providing it makes it back on the field.

Darnell Dockett hasn't been healthy since before the '02 Gator Bowl and, along with Travis Johnson, must clear up some legal/personal issues before being reinstated. Jeff Womble, a solid run-stopper, is returning from a ruptured Achilles', but Kevin Emanuel is coming off his best season and can play inside or out, while ends Eric Moore, Chauncey Davis and Kamerion Wimbley have the potential to be havoc-wrecking pass rushers.

All-American defensive end Greg Gathers' expected return from a career-threatening kidney ailment gives Georgia Tech four returning starters, despite the springtime flunk-out of end Tony Hargrove. Underclass tackles Alfred Malone and Travis Parker help the Jackets upgrade this long-time problem spot.

With monstrous Randy Starks in the middle of Maryland's three-man front, the Terrapins will be strong, especially when C.J. Feldheim returns from injury. The development of a quality rush end, however, is much-needed.

Virginia is young and talented, headed by junior defensive end Chris Canty, the league's only lineman ranked among the ACC's top 25 tacklers.

LINEBACKERS

1. Florida State
2. Georgia Tech
3. Maryland
4. Virginia
5. N.C. State
6. Wake Forest
7. Duke
8. North Carolina
9. Clemson

Though undersized, Florida State's returning corps of Michael Boulware, Kendyll Pope and Allen Augustin — all seniors — offer the league's best sideline-to-sideline coverage and playmaking ability. And the Seminoles really like what they see from understudies A.J. Nicholson, Sam McGrew and Buster Davis.

Experience is also critical for Georgia Tech, and seniors Keyaron Fox and Daryl Smith have plenty of it. They combined for 191 stops last season from the outside linebacker spots.

Virginia's Darryl Blackstock was the nation's best freshman linebacker a year ago and should get a significant boost with the arrival of heralded prep recruits Kai Parham and Ahmad Brooks, who should be in the starting lineup before October.

Replacing two-time ACC Defensive Player of the Year E.J. Henderson is a tall order, but Maryland's Leon Joe is up to the task after playing in his shadow the past two years. Jamahl Cochran, Leroy Ambush and D'Qwell Jackson step up for the Terps.

At N.C. State, Pat Thomas (103 stops) appears ready to replace leading tackler Dantonio Burnette.

SECONDARY

1. Maryland
2. Virginia
3. Florida State
4. N.C. State
5. Wake Forest
6. North Carolina
7. Clemson
8. Duke
9. Georgia Tech

The best way to defense eight returning starting quarterbacks is with seasoned defensive backs, and there are plenty to go around in the ACC. Maryland, Florida State, Wake Forest and Duke each return four starters.

Maryland's once-dreadful secondary is led by field corner Domonique Foxworth, who led the league in pass breakups as a sophomore (18) and snared five interceptions. Safety Madieu Williams has corner coverage ability and the requisite nose for the football.

Virginia senior Almondo Curry is the big (6-2) cover corner everyone covets, and is one of three returning starters on a unit that allowed just 14 touchdown passes a year ago.

It is anyone's guess whether Florida State remotely resembles Seminole secondaries of old, but there should be enough familiarity and depth — if not talent — to ease potentially anxious moments. FSU is two deep everywhere, with six players boasting starting experience. Corners Stanford Samuels and Rufus Brown will be third-year starters.

Rover Andre Maddox is the linchpin for N.C. State's defense. Returning corners Marcus Hudson and Lamont Reid provide seasoned support.

SPECIAL TEAMS

1. Maryland
2. Florida State
3. Clemson
4. North Carolina
5. Wake Forest
6. N.C. State
7. Virginia
8. Duke
9. Georgia Tech

Maryland's Nick Novak and FSU's Xavier Beitia carry their head-up battle to be the league's premier kicker into a third season. Not surprisingly, the Terrapins and Seminoles lead the way on special teams, even though both schools must replace punters.

Return specialists Steve Suter (four punts for touchdowns) and Leon Washington, are threats to bring the ball all the way back for the Terps and 'Noles. They also flourish on two of the league's stingiest coverage units, and it's impossible to overlook FSU's penchant for blocking punts and kicks. B.J. Ward blocked four last season for FSU, and should once again make opponents wary.

Clemson boasts a nice combination with kicker Aaron Hunt and returner Derrick Hamilton, though the Tigers have been suspect on limiting returns.

North Carolina's Dan Orner is the ACC's only kicker with three 50-yard field goals in the same game. Wake Forest kicker Matt Wisnosky and punter Ryan Plackemeier enjoyed a great deal of success down the stretch after slow starts last season.

ACC

Year in Review

THE RACE

Florida State took care of two of its closest challengers with rousing victories before mid-September, waxing Virginia 40-19 and vanquishing defending champ Maryland 37-10.

Even as the non-conference losses piled up (Louisville, Miami, Notre Dame), the Seminoles continued to do what they usually do — breeze right through the ACC.

North Carolina State was staying in step for a while, starting 3-0 in the league, but then hit a rough patch that had the Wolfpack skidding to three consecutive league losses in November.

By that time, the Seminoles were 7-0 in conference play, leaving only Maryland with a chance to tie FSU in the standings — and perhaps claim the league's BCS spot, based on a potentially higher national ranking.

That door was opened when North Carolina State beat FSU 17-7 on Nov. 23, but later that day Maryland fell to Virginia 48-13 to give the 'Noles the undisputed league title.

"I ain't too thrilled," FSU coach Bobby Bowden said of backing in to an automatic spot in the Bowl Championship Series. "I don't know whether to jump up-and-down, cry, or what."

THE CHAMPION

Florida State again occupied the ACC's penthouse suite, but lost its high-rent standing among the nation's elite.

An ambitious non-conference schedule delivered three losses to the 'Noles, and then a second consecutive defeat to North Carolina State (and old pal Chuck Amato) pushed FSU to the fringes of the Top 25.

Off-field issues, such as a gambling probe centering on QB Adrian McPherson (who was kicked off the team), dominated the late-season headlines. Chris Rix was suspended for the postseason when he overslept and missed a final exam, so, without its top two quarterbacks, FSU was handled 26-13 in the Sugar Bowl by Georgia (and old pal Mark Richt).

That left Florida State at 9-5, Bobby Bowden's first five-loss season since 1981.

THE STARS

Offensive Player of the Year: Matt Schaub, QB, Virginia

After being a part-time starter in 2001, Schaub blossomed in his junior season to earn overall ACC Player of the Year honors. He completed nearly 69 percent of his passes (288 of 418) for 2,976 yards and 28 touchdowns, with only seven interceptions.

Defensive Player of the Year: E.J. Henderson, LB, Maryland

After offseason back surgery, Henderson again posted an all-star season in which he earned the Chuck Bednarik Trophy as the nation's top defender. He had 175 tackles — 19.5 for loss — as well as three forced fumbles.

Coach of the Year: Al Groh, Virginia

With his team selected to finish eighth in the preseason conference poll, second-year coach Al Groh took a young team and fashioned a 9-5 record, including a surprising blowout of West Virginia in the Continental Tire Bowl in Charlotte, N.C.

THE BOWLS

Seven of the league's nine teams earned a bowl invitation (that was an NCAA-record 78 percent from one conference), and although stretched thin, the ACC managed a 4-3 record.

Most notable was the league's performance in the biggest bowls, Florida State notwithstanding.

Sugar	Georgia 26, Florida State 13
Gator	N.C. State 28, Notre Dame 6
Peach	Maryland 30, Tennessee 3
Continental Tire	Virginia 48, West Virginia 22
Tangerine	Texas Tech 55, Clemson 15
Seattle	Wake Forest 38, Oregon 17
Silicon Valley	Fresno State 30, Georgia Tech 21

ALL-ACC TEAM

*as selected by the league coaches

OFFENSE — First Team

QB	Matt Schaub, Virginia
RB	Chris Downs, Maryland
RB	T.A. McLendon, N.C. State
WR	Jerricho Cotchery, N.C. State
WR	Billy McMullen, Virginia
TE	Sean Berton, N.C. State
C	Todd Wike, Maryland
OL	Montrae Holland, Florida State
OL	Blake Henry, Wake Forest
OL	Brett Williams, Florida State
OL	Matt Crawford, Maryland
K	Nick Novak, Maryland
SP	Steve Suter, Maryland

OFFENSE — Second Team

QB	Philip Rivers, N.C. State
RB	Greg Jones, Florida State
RB	Alex Wade, Duke
WR	Kerry Watkins, Georgia Tech
WR	Anquan Boldin, Florida State
TE	Heath Miller, Virginia
C	Antoine Mirambeau, Florida State
OL	Lamar Bryant, Maryland
OL	Shane Riggs, N.C. State
OL	Nat Dorsey, Georgia Tech
OL	Chris Colmer, N.C. State
K	Luke Manget, Georgia Tech
SP	Fabian Davis, Wake Forest

DEFENSE — First Team

DL	Alonzo Jackson, Florida State
DL	Calvin Pace, Wake Forest
DL	Shawn Johnson, Duke
DL	Nick Eason, Clemson
LB	E.J. Henderson, Maryland
LB	Dantonio Burnette, N.C. State
LB	Angelo Crowell, Virginia
DB	Terrence Holt, N.C. State
DB	Jeremy Muires, Georgia Tech
DB	Dexter Reid, North Carolina
DB	Domonique Foxworth, Maryland
P	Brooks Barnard, Maryland

DEFENSE — Second Team

DL	Chris Canty, Virginia
DL	Shawn Price, N.C. State
DL	Randy Starks, Maryland
DL	Bryant McNeal, Clemson
LB	Mike Boulware, Florida State
LB	Recardo Wimbush, Georgia Tech
LB	Kendyll Pope, Florida State
DB	Justin Miller, Clemson
DB	Brian Mance, Clemson
DB	Madieu Williams, Maryland
DB	Jerton Evans, Virginia
P	Chance Gwaltney, Florida State

THE STANDINGS

	ACC	Pct.	PF	PA	All	Pct.	PF	PA
Florida State	7-1	.875	275	142	9-5	.643	428	301
Maryland	6-2	.750	247	161	11-3	.786	451	228
Virginia	6-2	.750	220	185	9-5	.643	402	348
N.C. State	5-3	.625	192	127	11-3	.786	460	238
Clemson	4-4	.500	197	223	7-6	.538	330	349
Georgia Tech	4-4	.500	148	150	7-6	.538	280	267
Wake Forest	3-5	.375	196	198	7-6	.538	356	327
North Carolina	1-7	.125	113	285	3-9	.250	223	421
Duke	0-8	.000	137	254	2-10	.167	227	353

INDIVIDUAL

PASSING EFFICIENCY	ATT	CMP	PCT	YDS	TD	RATING
Matt Schaub, Virginia	418	288	68.9	2976	28	147.5
Scott McBrien, Maryland	284	162	57.0	2497	15	141.3
Philip Rivers, North Carolina State	418	262	62.7	3353	20	141.1
James MacPherson, Wake Forest	223	123	55.2	1837	8	132.6
Charlie Whitehurst, Clemson	214	123	57.5	1554	10	128.3
Chris Rix, Florida State	225	118	52.4	1684	13	128.2
Adam Smith, Duke	308	174	56.5	2031	12	118.9
A.J. Suggs, Georgia Tech	363	208	57.3	2242	12	111.8

RUSHING	CAR	YDS	AVG	YDS/G
T.A. McLendon, North Carolina State	245	1101	4.5	84.7
Chris Downs, Maryland	208	1154	5.5	82.4
Alex Wade, Duke	201	979	4.9	81.6
Tarence Williams, Wake Forest	186	852	4.6	71.0
Wali Lundy, Virginia	196	826	4.2	59.0
Chris Douglas, Duke	131	640	4.9	58.2
Chris Barclay, Wake Forest	144	703	4.9	54.1
Nick Maddox, Florida State	106	602	5.7	50.2
Bernard Rambert, Clemson	117	488	4.2	48.8
Jacque Lewis, North Carolina	130	574	4.4	47.8

TOTAL OFFENSE	PLAYS	YDS	YDS/G	PUNTING	NO	AVG
Philip Rivers, N.C. State	475	3453	246.6	Brooks Barnard, Maryland	55	43.1
Matt Schaub, Virginia	488	3071	219.4	Chris Morehouse, Georgia Tech	33	42.3
Scott McBrien, Maryland	372	2781	198.6	Chance Gwaltney, Florida State	72	39.8
Chris Rix, Florida State	311	1973	179.4	Dan Dyke, Georgia Tech	39	39.3
A.J. Suggs, Georgia Tech	415	2263	174.1	Trey McDonald, Duke	49	39.2
Adam Smith, Duke	370	1912	159.3	Austin Herbert, North Carolina State	61	37.2
James MacPherson, Wake Forest	291	2014	154.9	Wynn Kopp, Clemson	63	37.1
Charlie Whitehurst, Clemson	257	1534	153.4	Tom Hagan, Virginia	62	36.7
T.A. McLendon, N.C. State	245	1101	84.7	John Lafferty, North Carolina	61	36.6
Chris Downs, Maryland	208	1154	82.4			

INTERCEPTIONS	G	NO	YDS	TD	IPG
Justin Miller, Clemson	13	8	50	0	0.62
Brian Mance, Clemson	13	6	1	0	0.46
Jeremy Muynes, Georgia Tech	13	5	37	0	0.38
Dononique Foxworth, Maryland	14	5	64	0	0.36
Rod Johnson, North Carolina State	12	4	67	0	0.33
Madieu Williams, Maryland	14	4	0	0	0.29
Alex Green, Duke	12	3	31	0	0.25
Terrell Smith, Duke	12	3	17	0	0.25
Kenneth Stanford, Duke	12	3	-7	0	0.25
Stanford Samuels, Florida State	13	3	91	1	0.23

SCORING	TD	XP	FG	PTS	PT/G
Nick Novak, Maryland	0	53	24	125	8.9
T.A. McLendon, North Carolina State	18	0	0	108	8.3
Xavier Beitia, Florida State	0	51	19	108	7.7
Aaron Hunt, Clemson	0	37	17	88	7.3
Matt Wisnasky, Wake Forest	0	33	17	84	6.5
Chris Downs, Maryland	15	0	0	90	6.4
Anquan Boldin, Florida State	13	0	0	78	5.6
Ovie Mughelli, Wake Forest	12	0	0	72	5.5
Luke Mangel, Georgia Tech	0	29	12	65	5.4
Brent Garber, Duke	0	21	14	63	5.2

TOTAL OFFENSE	PLAYS	YDS	YDS/G	PUNTING	NO	AVG	RECEIVING	G	CT	YDS	YDS/G
Philip Rivers, N.C. State	475	3453	246.6	Brooks Barnard, Maryland	55	43.1	Jericho Catchery, N.C. State	14	67	1192	85.1
Matt Schaub, Virginia	488	3071	219.4	Chris Morehouse, Georgia Tech	33	42.3	Sam Aiken, North Carolina	12	68	990	82.5
Scott McBrien, Maryland	372	2781	198.6	Chance Gwaltney, Florida State	72	39.8	Kerry Watkins, Georgia Tech	13	71	1050	80.8
Chris Rix, Florida State	311	1973	179.4	Dan Dyke, Georgia Tech	39	39.3	Anquan Boldin, Florida State	14	65	1011	72.2
A.J. Suggs, Georgia Tech	415	2263	174.1	Trey McDonald, Duke	49	39.2	Billy McMullen, Virginia	14	69	894	63.9
Adam Smith, Duke	370	1912	159.3	Austin Herbert, North Carolina State	61	37.2	J.J. McKelvey, Clemson	13	52	785	60.4
James MacPherson, Wake Forest	291	2014	154.9	Wynn Kopp, Clemson	63	37.1	Jason Anderson, Wake Forest	10	23	535	53.5
Charlie Whitehurst, Clemson	257	1534	153.4	Tom Hagan, Virginia	62	36.7	Derrick Hamilton, Clemson	13	52	602	46.3
T.A. McLendon, N.C. State	245	1101	84.7	John Lafferty, North Carolina	61	36.6	Kevin Youngblood, Clemson	13	59	591	45.5
Chris Downs, Maryland	208	1154	82.4				Talman Gardner, Florida State	14	38	625	44.6

TEAM

TOTAL OFFENSE	PLAYS	YDS	YDS/G
Wake Forest	990	5305	408.1
Florida State	981	5573	398.1
North Carolina State	969	5485	391.8
Maryland	916	5451	389.4
Georgia Tech	935	4871	374.7
North Carolina	847	4429	369.1
Clemson	920	4726	363.5
Duke	872	4300	358.3
Virginia	934	4999	357.1

SCORING OFFENSE	G	PTS	AVG
North Carolina State	14	460	32.9
Maryland	14	451	32.2
Florida State	14	428	30.6
Virginia	14	402	28.7
Wake Forest	13	356	27.4
Clemson	13	330	25.4
Georgia Tech	13	280	21.5
Duke	12	227	18.9
North Carolina	12	223	18.6

RUSHING OFFENSE	CAR	YDS	YDS/G
Wake Forest	718	3135	241.2
Maryland	592	2783	198.8
Florida State	562	2618	187.0
Georgia Tech	500	2127	163.6
Duke	487	1901	158.4
North Carolina State	522	2017	144.1
Virginia	486	1777	126.9
Clemson	458	1569	120.7
North Carolina	414	1230	102.5

PASSING OFFENSE	ATT	COMP	YDS	YDS/G
North Carolina	433	237	3199	266.6
North Carolina State	447	273	3468	247.7
Clemson	462	268	3157	242.8
Virginia	448	306	3222	230.1
Georgia Tech	435	239	2744	211.1
Florida State	419	217	2955	211.1
Duke	385	206	2399	199.9
Maryland	324	179	2668	190.6
Wake Forest	272	147	2170	166.9

TOTAL DEFENSE	PLAYS	YDS	YDS/G
North Carolina State	962	4211	300.8
Maryland	975	4743	338.8
Clemson	919	4620	355.4
Georgia Tech	926	4624	355.7
Florida State	962	5124	366.0
Duke	830	4502	375.2
Wake Forest	911	5073	390.2
Virginia	1073	5944	424.6
North Carolina	861	5429	452.4

SCORING DEFENSE	G	PTS	AVG
Maryland	14	228	16.3
North Carolina State	14	238	17.0
Georgia Tech	13	267	20.5
Florida State	14	301	21.5
Virginia	14	348	24.9
Wake Forest	13	327	25.2
Clemson	13	349	26.8
Duke	12	353	29.4
North Carolina	12	421	35.1

RUSHING DEFENSE	CAR	YDS	YDS/G
Duke	425	1446	120.5
North Carolina State	525	1754	125.3
Maryland	531	1801	128.6
Florida State	497	1831	130.8
Georgia Tech	486	1750	134.6
Clemson	530	2056	158.2
Wake Forest	498	2057	158.2
Virginia	640	2924	208.9
North Carolina	555	2654	221.2

PASSING DEFENSE	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT	POINTS
North Carolina State	437	217	2457	13	16	175.5
Clemson	389	233	2564	20	21	197.2
Maryland	444	251	2942	12	18	210.1
Virginia	433	262	3020	14	15	215.7
Georgia Tech	440	235	2874	11	11	221.1
North Carolina	306	168	2775	24	6	231.2
Wake Forest	413	242	3016	22	13	232.0
Florida State	465	249	3293	21	16	235.2
Duke	405	245	3056	18	12	254.7

KICKOFF RETURNS	NO	YDS	AVG
North Carolina State	37	923	24.9
Clemson	52	1264	24.3
Maryland	29	659	22.7
Virginia	49	1083	22.1
Florida State	43	921	21.4
Georgia Tech	43	839	19.5
North Carolina	52	1012	19.5
Wake Forest	38	673	17.7
Duke	40	685	17.1

PUNT RETURNS	NO	YDS	AVG
Maryland	58	773	13.3
Florida State	45	477	10.6
Clemson	42	437	10.4
Georgia Tech	52	524	10.1
Virginia	39	385	9.9
Wake Forest	41	370	9.0
North Carolina State	35	290	8.3
Duke	32	187	5.8
North Carolina	24	137	5.7

NET PUNTING	NO	AVG	RET	YDS/R	AVG
Maryland	55	43.1	28	5.4	37.7
Georgia Tech	74	39.9	37	4.1	35.8
Wake Forest	61	40.3	32	5.4	34.9
Florida State	76	38.6	45	5.2	33.3
Duke	70	37.9	42	5.4	32.5
North Carolina State	61	37.2	34	5.1	32.1
North Carolina	68	36.0	36	4.7	31.4
Virginia	66	34.8	36	4.7	30.2
Clemson	65	36.0	41	6.4	29.6

TURNOVERS	+FUM	INT	TOTAL -FUM	INT	TOTAL GAME		
Wake Forest	21	13	34	10	6	1.38	
Virginia	22	15	37	14	8	2.1	1.07
Florida State	16	16	32	11	10	2.1	0.79
N.C. State	15	16	31	13	11	2.4	0.50
Duke	13	12	25	10	13	2.3	0.17
Clemson	9	21	30	15	13	2.8	0.13
Maryland	8	18	26	12	13	2.5	0.07
Georgia Tech	11	11	22	10	20	-0.62	
North Carolina	9	6	15	16	14	30	-1.25

* Bold indicates returning players.

TAKING PROFESSIONAL APPROACH

The NFL has not awarded a franchise to Charlottesville, a historic academic village located in the shadows of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains.

University of Virginia coach Al Groh seems not to have noticed.

His program is set up with the same framework that led the New York Giants and New England Patriots to Super Bowls in the 1990s and reversed the sagging fortunes of the New York Jets.

Everything about the Cavaliers' program has a pro flavor.

UVa's coaching staff is loaded with assistants with professional backgrounds — as players, coaches or both. Groh, who spent 13 years in "The League," mostly as a faithful assistant coach to future Hall of Famer Bill Parcells, is the staff exclamation point.

After spending most of his adult life in pursuit of an NFL head coaching job, Groh left that dream after only one year as coach of the New York Jets and returned to his alma mater with one goal in mind: Win a national championship.

He introduced a pro-style operation to Charlottesville. From the outside looking in, everything about UVa football projects a professional feel — the terminology, playbooks, offense, defense, special teams, practices, player evaluation, recruiting, game planning ... you name it.

When Texas blue-chip offensive lineman Ian-Yates Cunningham chose Virginia over Nebraska, Oklahoma and Notre Dame in February, the wide-bodied prospect said: "Virginia runs a pro offense coached by pro coaches in a pro atmosphere. They're running a pro program, only in college."

Groh would be the first to agree with that characterization.

"But I don't think of it as a pro system or a college system," Groh said. "This is what we know, so it's what we teach and what we play."

VIRGINIA'S NFL STYLE HAS LED TO WINS, RECRUITING SUCCESS

BY JERRY RATCLIFFE

It works. Taking over a downtrodden program in late December of 2000 there was little time to recruit, yet the turnaround has been swift. In only his second year on the job, Groh led the Cavaliers to a second-place finish in the ACC, stunned 13th-ranked West Virginia 48-22 in the Continental Tire Bowl and won ACC Coach of the Year honors.

Wahoo faithful proudly display signs that read, "Miracle Groh," to describe the revitalization of Cavalier football. But Groh insists there are no miracles, no smoke and mirrors, no hocus-pocus. It's merely a solid plan.

"Certainly the experience of those 13 years in the NFL are significant in how we operate," said Groh, who worked as line-

backers coach and defensive coordinator with nine Pro Bowl linebackers, including Hall of Famer Lawrence Taylor. "I was a working cog in there most of the time, but those systems have proven to be successful systems that will work as good as any."

Groh will be the first to admit that great assistant coaches make a system work. When he began to build his staff — which he affectionately calls "The Tribe" — he looked for a common link. That denominator was pro football experience.

"That wasn't a prerequisite, but if a guy has been in the NFL, he has practical experience of what works and that gives him an advantage," said Groh.

"That's just that much more he brings to the job. The other aspect is that the systems we're running, (the NFL) is where they came from. If a person had practical experience in the pros as a player or coach, then he's seeing or hearing the same game the rest of us are seeing and hearing."

Virginia assistant head coach Danny Rocco, who has worked for seven Division I-A football programs and the New York Jets, says the staff's pro experience gives the Cavaliers an edge.

"This entire organization is set up as an NFL organization," said Rocco. "The systems we utilize are 100-percent conducive to what they do in the NFL."

Besides Rocco, the remainder of "The Tribe" also have NFL roots. Defensive coordinator Al Golden played in the league; special teams coach Corwin Brown retired after eight years in the NFL and went straight to UVa; recruiting coordinator and defensive line coach Mike London played briefly and worked as a coaching intern and mini-camp coach with several NFL teams; defensive backs coach Bob Price coached six years in the Canadian Football League and was head coach of the Montreal Alouettes.

New offensive coordinator and offensive line coach Ron Prince served NFL Minority Fellowships with the Washington Redskins, Atlanta Falcons, Jacksonville Jaguars and New York Giants. He replaced Bill Musgrave, a former NFL quarterback and coach, who returned to the NFL this year as Jacksonville's new offensive coordinator. UVa running backs coach Kevin Ross assisted in training camps with the Chargers and Lions while his father, Bobby, was head coach. Mike Groh, Al's son, played briefly in the NFL and World League before becoming an offensive assistant and quality control coach with the Jets in 2000.

The latest additions to UVa's coaching staff are tight ends coach Andy Heck, an All-American on Notre Dame's 1988 national championship squad and a 12-year starter for three NFL teams; and former Virginia All-American Anthony Poindexter, who played for Baltimore and Cleveland. Even the team's strength coach, Evan Marcus, moved to UVa from the New Orleans Saints.

"We have a bunch of guys here who have been there (in the pros)," Heck said. "A lot of things we talk about, the terms we use are NFL language."

Players aren't freshmen, they're rookies. It's not spring practice, it's mini-camp. It's not fall practice, it's training camp. The



PHOTO BY BRUCE SCHWARTZMAN

first scrimmage is an exhibition game. When Virginia played five consecutive ranked teams at the end of last season, the coaches told the players that they were in the playoff hunt.

"The day we got to Charlotte to prepare for the bowl game, Coach Groh drew analogies to his experience going into NFL cities — which Charlotte is — playing in an NFL stadium, which we did," said Rocco. "We were treating it like a playoff game. This organization knows how to go into a big football game, knows how to prepare for a one-game season type of deal, which a bowl game is."

"That example is as strong as any," added Rocco. "The outcome of that game was totally unexpected. For us to go in and do what we did to West Virginia was unthinkable for many. But these kids were ready to play."

And they play with the tools they'll see if they get to the next level.

"Offensively, the Virginia system is the same one that I personally ran as an NFL player," said Heck. "Defensively, nothing has changed from what Coach Groh ran in both of the New York teams and in New England."

All of this NFL influence has had a profound effect on UVa's recruiting. The Cavaliers' 2002 class was ranked a consensus top 10 nationally and the latest class was rated 11th by *SuperPrep*.

Groh makes sure when a prospect enters his office that a replica of the Giants' 1991 Super Bowl trophy is in their line of sight. When Chris Long, the son of Raiders Hall of Famer Howie Long, committed to UVa following his junior year last fall, the younger Long said the first thing he spotted on a visit to Groh's office was that Lombardi Trophy.

At Virginia, the NFL mindset has been contagious in that the players see it daily, live it, like it and have bought into it. The next step is obvious — to replace that Super Bowl Trophy on Groh's desk with a championship trophy of their own. ■

NOPE.
NO MORE
QBS.
HOW 'BOUT
A NOSEGUARD?



SEMINOLES' WOES MIGHT END WHERE THEY BEGAN— UNDER CENTER

During the height of Florida State's

football nirvana, which now seems far removed, success could be measured by simple steps.

All it took was the distance behind center.

The Seminoles rolled out steady quarterbacks like they reeled off 10-win seasons. One begat another in what just seemed to be a natural progression. The following year's starter learned behind the current veteran.

"We got spoiled," coach Bobby Bowden said. "For years and years, we had guys ready for their turn. But we got away from that. And we've been unstable there."

Boy, have they ever.

On the field, off the field.

In the classroom, in the courtroom.

One bad tidings after another.

Unstable is overly kind. Last season, Florida State's quarterback situation turned from uncertain to unbelievable.

The Seminoles started the preseason with five quarterbacks. They ended in the Sugar Bowl (a loss to Georgia) with a wide receiver, Anquan Boldin, operating from a makeshift shotgun.

Consider this bit of instability: Chris Rix was first hailed, then benched (after a loss to Notre Dame), then redeemed (Florida win), then assailed (suspended for Sugar Bowl for missing final exam).

Want more? Adrian McPherson was going to redshirt, then was required to play, then was promoted to starter (after Notre Dame loss), then dismissed from the team.

After McPherson completed just eight of 20 passes for 80 yards in a 17-7 loss against North Carolina State, months of rumors about his possible gambling activities turned into a police probe of assorted and sordid illegal activity.

Even when booted, McPherson, who was once a two-sport prep phenom, wouldn't go away. His myriad off-field problems triggered an 800-page law-enforcement report into gambling that suggested FSU athletic officials weren't diligent enough in pursuing rumors.

To be sure, Bowden has been stressed out.

After 14 consecutive years of national title challenges, including two championships and bowl victories galore, his team is 17-9 the past two seasons.

The Seminoles enter this season with their aura extinguished.

Yet, Bowden remains buoyed. He sees the return of fourth-year junior Rix as the reason for hope. Should Rix stumble again, backups await. The Seminoles have Fabian Walker, fully healed from a torn muscle in his throwing shoulder that hindered him last season, including his forced start in the Sugar Bowl.

Walker is also a dependable citizen. So is the No. 3 quarterback, redshirt freshman Wyatt Sexton, a straight-A student with a grade-A arm.

Maybe, just maybe, the Seminoles can restart their production line.

"I think the biggest difference in this football team right now is a stable quarterback situation, which is something we haven't had in two years," Bowden said. "It's been a shaky, iffy, not-sure-of, type of thing and I really think it carried over to our ball club.

"But I feel real good about these quarterbacks, whichever one

is under center. I think that is going to make a lot of difference going into next year."

The difference could be whether Rix can deliver. As a redshirt freshman in 2001, he was Bowden's youngest quarterback in the coaching legend's tenure at Florida State. He overcame early-season mistakes to become the ACC Freshman of the Year.

Florida State thought Rix would be even better last season. But after a fast start, he regressed and lost his starting job before rebounding in a 31-14 rout of rival Florida in the regular-season finale. Ten days later, however, Rix had fallen from grace, failing to take a required final exam. When he then missed the makeup exam, that left him ineligible for the bowl game, owing to a school policy prohibiting exam-skipping athletes from playing in the postseason.

"Every time he messes up, he always seems to come back stronger," said former Seminoles offensive tackle Brett Williams, who was one of Rix's friends on the team. "That's all he has to do. What he did against Florida is what he has to do all season."

The Seminoles coaches put Rix on notice during spring practice. They made him run post-practice sprints. They made him off-limits to media interviews until after the spring game.

"I don't think he has to go out of his way to impress people," said quarterbacks coach Daryl Dickey. "What he needs to be is steady and consistent and put the right foot forward everyday. That's what's been difficult to do."

Florida State is not a ball-control kind of team that works the field position looking for turnover-created opportunities. Bowden believes in air power and likes to go for the jugular before the fourth quarter. That demands a quarterback who can make the right decisions.

The Seminoles are relying heavily on Rix to make those decisions in 2003.

This team has also spent considerable effort in trying to bring itself together. The division Rix and McPherson created last season — sides taken among teammates regarding who should play — substantially affected team chemistry.

Bowden and his staff have implemented new ideas to try to build bonds. They have summoned former players to help inspire.

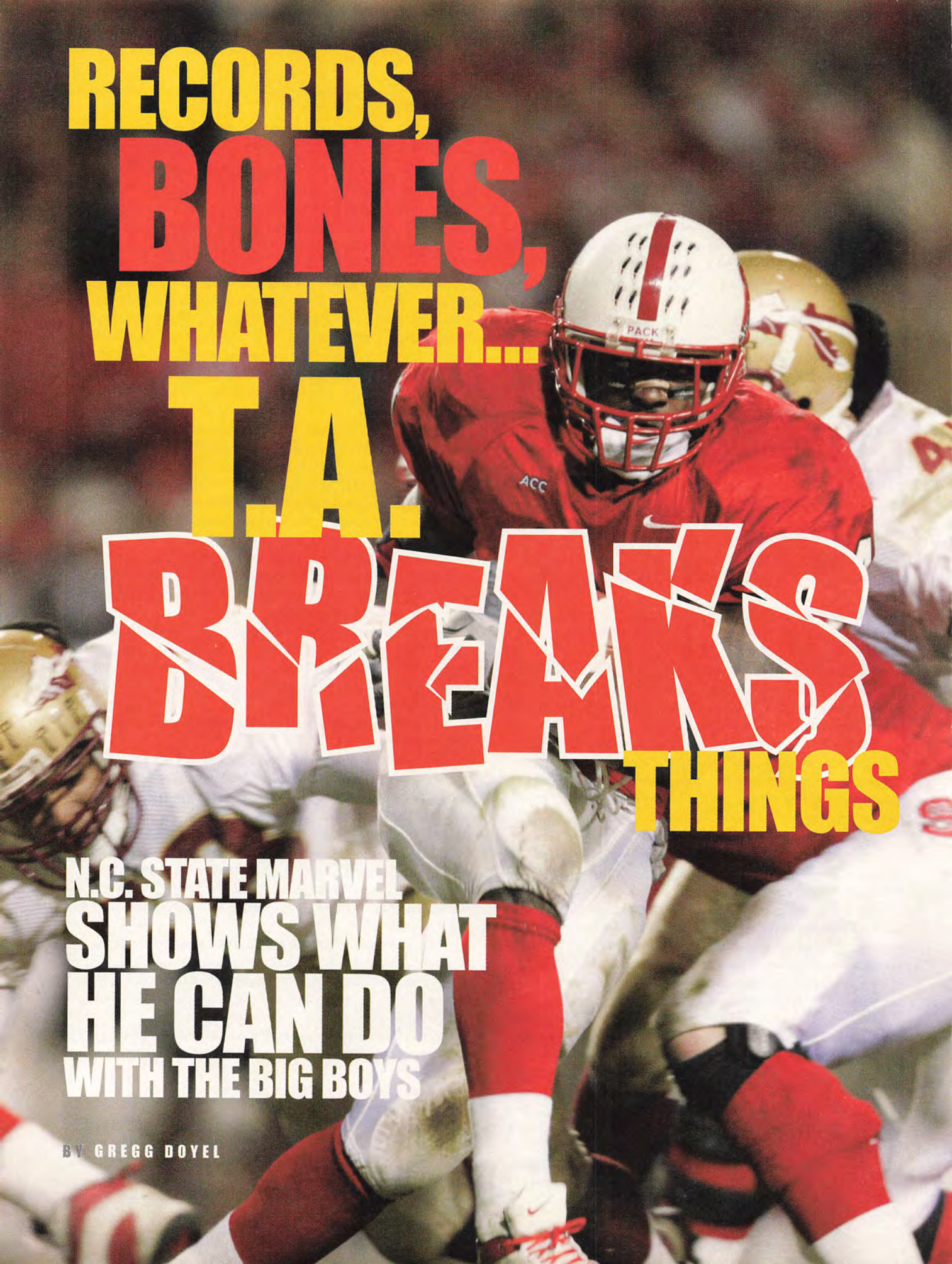
"We can get back. We are a long ways from it, but we can definitely get there," said receiver Dominic Robinson. "Everybody knows the talent is there. The potential is there, but we have to get that work ethic.

"The guys that were here before us — they were winning year after year and they had to live up to what just left. Since I've been here, we haven't had something to live up to. Those guys won and couldn't fathom not winning. That's what we're trying to get back to."

With 10 of 11 starters returning on defense, anything is possible. If the quarterback situation stabilizes, the Seminoles have weaponry.

"Where we are, I feel good," Bowden said. "I can see the potential, the talent on this team."

In that regard, Bobby Bowden sounds like every other coach entering a season. No longer does he have the sense of stability — steeped in the quarterback position — that helped to separate his program from the fray. ■



**RECORDS,
BONES,
WHATEVER...**

**T.A.
BREAKS
THINGS**

**N.C. STATE MARVEL
SHOWS WHAT
HE CAN DO
WITH THE BIG BOYS**

BY GREGG DOYEL

Before T.A. McLendon played his first game at N.C. State, Wolfpack coach Chuck Amato compared him to Herschel Walker and Bo Jackson.

It was a bit much and, as it turned out, totally unfair — to Walker and Jackson.

Neither of those guys — Heisman Trophy winners though they were for Georgia and Auburn — had the kind of high school career McLendon enjoyed at Albemarle (N.C.) High.

Then again, nobody had the kind of high school career McLendon did. He set national records for touchdowns in a season (71) and career (170 on the ground, 178 total), and also ran for a North Carolina-record 9,038 yards.

Still, there were questions. McLendon had played in the smallest classification of North Carolina football and was about to play at the highest level of college football.

There were whispers: Was he overrated?

Those whispers grew louder when McLendon reported to campus and was measured at 5-foot-11, 214 pounds — significantly smaller than his high school listing of 6-2 and 220.

Thus, in August 2002, Amato began the campaign.

"You score 71 touchdowns in a year, I don't care what 'A' you played in," Amato said, referring to Albemarle's small-school classification. "Bo Jackson played in a 1A league. Herschel Walker played in a 1A league. They turned out all right. T.A. will be just fine. He's just what the doctor ordered."

Especially if the doctor ordered touchdowns.

McLendon handled the gap between a small high school and a big college, setting records in rushing (1,101 yards) and touchdowns (18). The touchdown total set an N.C. State record and an ACC freshman mark. His yardage was No. 2 in school history for freshmen and he was just the 10th freshman to make the All-ACC first team.

"This is what I've been waiting for my whole life," McLendon said. "Go to college and be the person who gets it done. I know people were doubting me, but I think I proved what I can do."

McLendon is the baby face of N.C. State football, which, under Amato, is surging like never before.

In three seasons, Amato's record at his alma mater is 26-12, with two wins in three bowl appearances — including a 28-6 stomping of Notre Dame in the 2003 Gator Bowl. The Wolfpack's 11 victories in 2002 set a program record and it came on the backs of players like McLendon — young, confident and talented.

Amato, whose recruiting in South Florida as a Florida State assistant coach helped build the foundation for FSU's dynasty, is doing it all over again at N.C. State. The roster is stocked with Florida athletes at receiver (Sterling Hicks), linebacker (Pat Thomas, Roger Pollard, Oliver Hoyte), cornerback (Greg Golden, Marcus Hudson) and safety (Andre Maddox).

"I love it — I really do," Amato said. "The only way to get this thing where we want to get it is with recruiting."

He backed those words three years ago with his first hire, grabbing receivers coach Doc Holliday, known as one of the better recruiters in the Southeast.

Aside from establishing the talent flow from Florida, Amato also has done his share of in-state work, with his best signees in recent years including Durham cornerback A.J. Davis, Richlands defensive end Mario Williams ... and the kid from that little school in Albemarle who had a pretty good freshman year.

By midseason, McLendon had become the focal point of the Wolfpack offense. He finished with 42 catches for 354 yards, both of those totals second in school history for a freshman — and he

played the final seven games with a cast on his right hand after having a screw surgically implanted in his broken wrist.

McLendon's first game after surgery was against North Carolina, and UNC coach John Bunting sounded as if he'd rather pet a cobra than face McLendon — with or without the cast.

"You can't try to go for the ball," Bunting said. "Some players you could do that with, but you can't do it with McLendon. He's too big and too strong. There's only one way to stop a great runner like that — have people swarming to the ball. As my coach (at North Carolina) Bill Dooley would say, 'Pepper him with your headgear.'"

Just don't be surprised if the headgear breaks. McLendon broke a handful of helmets in practice and also cracked his share of shoulder pads. That's not all he cracked, come to think of it.

"Every time T.A. practices, he hurts people," Amato said.



SCHWARTZMAN

Bonebreaker:

Fearless, until he broke his wrist. Next game — he produced through the pain.

"He broke (starting safety) Andre Maddox's nose, and he bruised (backup safety) Rod Johnson's shoulder. T.A. might not have the overall acceleration (of some smaller backs), but there comes a point where he might just run over your fanny."

That point came most resoundingly in the Texas Tech game, one that could have been the low point of McLendon's season.

McLendon had been told the day before the game that he would make his first college start. McLendon wasn't nervous — he fell right to sleep that night. Problem is, he didn't wake up when the alarm went off, and wasn't on the team bus as it was ready to leave the hotel. An assistant had to rouse him, and McLendon stepped onto the bus to the razzing of teammates.

A few minutes later, running backs coach Dick Portee delivered the bad news: "You know you're not going to start now, because you messed up. We'll put you in there, but just chill out."

Midway through the first quarter, the Wolfpack put McLendon in, and on his first carry he broke three tackles for a nine-yard gain. He would break 21 more tackles that day, finishing with 150 yards rushing and an ACC freshman record five touchdowns — including the game-winner in overtime.

"He can be late for every game if he's going to produce like that," Amato said.

McLendon followed the Texas Tech game with 117 yards and two touchdowns against Massachusetts, but by game's end he couldn't hold the football anymore. He had suffered the broken wrist, and his fingers had swelled to the point where he couldn't squeeze the ball.

"I had never broken a bone in my life, and it scared me," McLendon said. "When they said I broke a bone in my wrist, I was like, 'What?' I thought I was done."

The Wolfpack was off that week, with the North Carolina game the following Saturday. McLendon had surgery, barely practiced, then had one of his best games of the season against the Tar Heels — 164 yards rushing, two touchdowns, 20 broken tackles.

"T.A. McLendon," said Amato, "is one tough hombre." ■





CLEMSON TIGERS

The storm clouds that settled over upstate South Carolina in the spring were accompanied by a sense of foreboding surrounding coach Tommy Bowden's tenure at Clemson.

When Bowden was asked last fall about his future with the Tigers, he said he planned

needs to show improvement quickly.

That's a realistic expectation for a talented, young team that could surprise opponents in this critical season.

Cornerback Justin Miller led the ACC in interceptions last season as a freshman. Quarterback Charlie Whitehurst set three

arrived at Clemson from Tulane after the 1998 season, he was hailed by football gurus such as Bill Walsh for his innovative, no-huddle, fast-paced offense.

Using that offense, Clemson set a school scoring record with 34.7 points per game in 2000, when Clemson finished 9-3. But as

Bowden Not Satisfied with Level of Success

to be in Clemson at least until the water rose to its normal level near the dock at his home on Lake Hartwell, just outside of town.

Bowden was indicating that he felt secure at Clemson because one of the driest droughts in history had lake levels down more than six feet below normal.

But an unusually wet spring quickly brought the lake level back up to normal. The irony hasn't been lost on Bowden, who is just 14-11 over the past two seasons after an embarrassing, 55-15 loss to Texas Tech in the Tangerine Bowl.

"The lake now is way too high," Bowden said, laughing. "Way too high for me."

Bowden has five seasons remaining on his contract, which pays him \$1.1 million a year, plus incentives. He is the first coach ever to lead Clemson to bowl games in each of his first four seasons, and he is 29-20 with the Tigers.

But after going 7-5 in 2001 and 7-6 in 2002, Clemson's players sense that they need to show improvement this season to prove that the program is on the right track.

"There is a lot on the line," said senior defensive end J.J. Howard. "We have been here for five years now. This is Coach Bowden's first recruiting class, the end of it, right here. This year is what it's all about."

The Tigers under Bowden have failed to close the gap on Florida State and coach Bobby Bowden, Tommy's father. Meanwhile, Virginia, Maryland and N.C. State all appear to be surpassing Clemson as rising powers in the ACC. Fans won't accept Clemson as the fifth-best ACC program for long, so Bowden

school passing records and tied another as a redshirt freshman — he might be the best NFL quarterback prospect ever to play for the Tigers.

Those players have the ability and some others have the motivation to make Clemson better than expected in 2003.

"We don't want to seem like last year, going 7-6 or whatever," said senior linebacker John Leake. "We don't want that. We don't want to go back to the Tangerine Bowl. We want to go to one of the big BCS bowls."

Bowden has instituted some radical changes intended to lead the Tigers to a high-profile bowl bid. When Bowden

opponents adjusted to the no-huddle and the four- and five-wideout sets, the Tigers began to struggle against quality competition.

Last season, Clemson rushed for just 120.7 yards per game, its second-worst total since 1970. And Bowden, who has credited his father's success at Florida State to an ability to change with the times, decided to de-emphasize the no-huddle.

Clemson spent much of the spring huddling and using tight ends and fullbacks to develop toughness on both sides of the ball.

at a glance

TIGERS

2002: 7-6 overall; 4-4 ACC (T-5th)

COACH: Tommy Bowden — At Clemson: 29-20, 4 years; Overall: 47-24, 6 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 12; 7 offense, 4 defense, kicker

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Charlie Whitehurst, CB Justin Miller, WR Derrick Hamilton, RB Yusef Kelly, LB John Leake, PK Aaron Hunt, DE Khaleed Vaughn, WR Kevin Youngblood

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: Sophomore quarterback Charlie Whitehurst is an excellent passer with dynamic targets in wide receivers Derrick Hamilton, Kevin Youngblood and Airese Currie. Increased emphasis on the running game could help Whitehurst by keeping opposing defenses from concentrating solely on stopping the pass.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: Clemson's offensive line was an embarrassment last

season in the Tangerine Bowl, and the defense has few proven playmakers aside from Miller and Leake. It remains to be seen whether adjustments on special teams will improve a unit that gave up five return touchdowns last season.

OVERVIEW: After going 14-11 over the past two seasons, Bowden needs a breakthrough year to solidify his job security. Problem is, the Tigers still trail Florida State in the ACC pecking order and have been surpassed by Maryland, Virginia and N.C. State. The Aug. 30 opener against Georgia will be a huge game for the Tigers' confidence. If Clemson defeats a talented team that beat them 31-28 last season, the confidence boost heading into the rest of the schedule will be tremendous. If the Tigers lose, they could be on the way to a third straight mediocre season.

RECEIVER DERRICK HAMILTON LED THE ACC IN ALL-PURPOSE RUNNING LAST SEASON.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

TIGERS RECRUITING

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
BILLIE , Tremaine RB	6-1, 195	Columbia	Dreher
Rivals.com rated No. 24 athlete nationally and No. 17 player in South Carolina ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ SuperPrep All-Mid-Atlantic Region, ranked No. 13 player in South Carolina ♦ Moved to running back as a junior, rushing for 2,003 yards and 19 touchdowns ♦ Had 52 tackles ♦ As a senior, had 1,570 yards rushing and 17 touchdowns ♦ Had 4,073 career yards rushing and 43 touchdowns.			
CAPOTE , Christian OL	6-5, 290	Miami, FL	Killian
All-State ♦ Ranked No. 10 Miami-Dade player by Miami Herald ♦ Three-year starter ♦ Had 117 pancake blocks and graded 93 percent on blocking assignments as a senior ♦ Allowed no quarterback sacks ♦ Two-year letterman in baseball.			
DEAN , Jad K	5-11, 190	Greenwood	Greenwood
PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ Rivals.com rated No. 1 kicker in South Carolina ♦ Ranked No. 21 player in South Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ Two-time All-State ♦ Three-time All-Region ♦ As a senior, made 42 of 43 extra point attempts and nine of 12 field goal attempts ♦ Had 39.8 yard punting average.			
DUKES , Marion OL	6-4, 295	Pickens	Pickens
Ranked No. 50 offensive lineman nationally and No. 10 player in South Carolina by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ Rated No. 9 player in South Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ Charlotte Observer ranked No. 2 lineman in South Carolina ♦ All-State ♦ Graded 80 percent on blocking assignments as a senior ♦ Had five pancake blocks and 10 knockdown blocks.			
GADDIS , C.J. QB	6-1, 205	Raeford, NC	Hoke County
SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 5 player in North Carolina ♦ Ranked No. 18 quarterback nationally and No. 7 player in North Carolina by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ Had 618 yards passing and eight touchdowns with no interceptions as a senior ♦ Had 591 yards rushing and eight touchdowns.			
GILLIAM , Sergio DB	6-3, 185	Greer	Greer
SuperPrep All-Mid-Atlantic Region, ranked No. 16 player in South Carolina ♦ Two-time All-State ♦ Led South Carolina in interceptions in junior (13) and senior (10) seasons ♦ Four-year letterman in football and basketball ♦ All-State in basketball as a junior ♦ Three-year letterman in track ♦ All-State in track.			
GREEN , Zach TE	6-6, 240	Conyers, GA	Salem
Two-time All-Area ♦ Three-year starter ♦ As a junior, had 31 receptions for 478 yards ♦ Two-year starter for basketball team ♦ Two-year letterman in track.			
JEFFERSON , Chris WR	6-2, 175	Morganton, NC	Freedom
Rated No. 66 wide receiver nationally by Rivals.com ♦ SuperPrep All-Mid-Atlantic Region, ranked No. 18 player in North Carolina ♦ Charlotte Observer All-Piedmont ♦ All-Conference ♦ All-Area.			

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
LATRAY , Clint OL	6-3, 270	Allen, TX	Allen
Rivals.com ranked No. 33 offensive guard nationally and No. 14 offensive lineman in Texas ♦ Third-team All-State ♦ All-District ♦ Three-year starter ♦ Helped team to district championship in final two seasons.			
MCDUFFIE , Chris OL	6-4, 310	Danville, VA	George Washington
All-State ♦ All-Region ♦ Class 3A Defensive Player of the Year ♦ Most Valuable Player in Virginia Shrine Bowl.			
NELSON , Maurice LB	6-2, 205	Sumter	Crestwood
PrepStar All-American ♦ Rated No. 16 defensive back nationally and No. 4 player in South Carolina by Rivals.com ♦ Charlotte Observer ranked No. 5 player in South Carolina ♦ As a senior, had 137 tackles, eight quarterback sacks, four interceptions and five fumbles recovered ♦ Four-year letterman in football and weightlifting.			
NOLEN , Brandon RB	5-11, 185	Old Bridge, NJ	Old Bridge
Rivals.com ranked No. 50 running back nationally ♦ SuperPrep All-Northeast Region ♦ All-State ♦ Two-time All-Conference ♦ As a senior, had 1,180 yards rushing and 17 touchdowns ♦ Had 35 tackles and one interception.			
PILGRIM , Brandon OL	6-5, 285	Lilburn, GA	Parkview
Rivals.com rated No. 47 offensive tackle nationally and No. 29 player in Georgia ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ County Offensive Lineman of the Year ♦ Two-year starter ♦ Helped team to three state championships and 45-0 record ♦ Three-year letterman.			
REESE , Robert ATH	5-11, 185	Temple, GA	Temple
Ranked No. 42 athlete nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Southeast Region ♦ Two-time All-State ♦ Had 3,992 career yards rushing and 19 touchdowns ♦ Had 13 career return touchdowns.			
STALEY , Brian DB	5-10, 180	Aiken	Georgia Military College
SuperPrep rated No. 14 junior college player nationally ♦ As a sophomore, had 10 interceptions, including three returned for touchdown ♦ Had 68 tackles, 26 passes broken up and one blocked punt ♦ Had nine interceptions, returning six for touchdowns, as a freshman ♦ Blocked four punts, returning one for touchdown ♦ Had 26 interceptions in high school.			
WATKINS , Nick LB	6-2, 215	New Orleans, LA	Karr
Two-time All-District ♦ All-Metro ♦ Team captain ♦ Three-year starter.			
WILLIAMS , Kwam DE	6-3, 220	Atlanta, GA	Westlake
Honorable mention All-StateAll-City ♦ All-Region ♦ Had 128 tackles, 14 quarterback sacks and one interception as a senior.			

A LOOK AT THE TIGERS

RESULTS

(7-6, 4-4)

28	at Georgia	31
33	LOUISIANA TECH	13
24	GEORGIA TECH	19
30	BALL STATE	7
31	at Florida State	48
17	at Virginia	22
31	WAKE FOREST	23
6	NORTH CAROLINA STATE	38
34	at Duke	31
42	at North Carolina	12
12	MARYLAND	30
27	South Carolina	20
TANGERINE BOWL		
15	Texas Tech	55

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING						
NAME	ATT	COMP	YARDS	PCT	TD	INT
Simmons	244	142	1559	58.2	6	7
Whitehurst	214	123	1554	57.5	10	6
RUSHING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
Kelly	125	520	4.2	25	8	
Rambert	117	488	4.2	25	6	
Hill	42	225	5.4	32	2	
Hamilton	21	208	9.9	77	2	
RECEIVING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
Youngblood	59	591	10.0	67	2	
McKelvey	52	785	15.1	59	4	
Hamilton	52	602	11.6	49	2	
Kelly	18	79	4.4	18	0	
DEFENSIVE LEADERS						
Tackles: Leake 169, Thomas 167, Meekins 97.						
Interceptions: Miller 8, Mance 6, Fountain 2.						
Sacks: McNeal 9, Eason 7.						
Tackles for loss: McNeal 14, Thomas 9, Leake 7.						

SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	GEORGIA
Sept. 6	FURMAN
Sept. 13	MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Sept. 20	at Georgia Tech
Oct. 4	at Maryland
Oct. 11	VIRGINIA
Oct. 18	at North Carolina State
Oct. 25	NORTH CAROLINA
Nov. 1	at Wake Forest
Nov. 8	FLORIDA STATE
Nov. 15	DUKE
Nov. 22	at South Carolina



LINEBACKER JOHN LEAKE RANKED FOURTH IN THE NATION LAST SEASON, AVERAGING 13 TACKLES PER GAME.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

"Hopefully it will be a breath of fresh air," said center Tommy Sharpe. "A couple of years ago, our offense was the brand new thing, no-huddle all the time. We were kind of pioneers in the no-huddle. It went well for a couple of years, but then people started adjusting to it, and now this is a nice little change."

The Tigers still will run the no-huddle at times and will use three- and four-wide-out packages because their deepest position is wide receiver. Kevin Youngblood, Derrick Hamilton and Airese Currie possess All-ACC ability, and redshirt freshman Kelvin Grant will be a player to watch.

Whitehurst proved in 2002 he can get those players the ball, and Clemson's rushing game can't help but get better as Bowden aims for higher standards in his fifth season with the Tigers.

"Four straight bowls is nice for a lot of people," Bowden said. "It's not nice for us. Because that's not the goal, going to bowl games. The objectives I would like to reach have not been met yet."

OFFENSE

Late in the fourth quarter of the Tangerine Bowl, in the midst of a miserable performance by Clemson's offensive line, Charlie Whitehurst went to the sideline

with a concussion.

Moving out of the shotgun and up under center during spring practice was a difficult adjustment for Whitehurst, but he welcomed the change in the offense because extra blockers mean more protection for him.

"Get as many as you can in front of me," Whitehurst said, laughing. "That's the way I like it."

Whitehurst stands 6-foot-4 and possesses an accurate arm and a lifetime of football experience as the son of David Whitehurst, a former Green Bay Packers quarterback.

After Tommy Bowden benched Willie Simmons last season, Whitehurst started Clemson's last five games. He threw for 10 touchdowns with just six interceptions and helped the Tigers go 3-1 in their last four regular-season games to secure the Tangerine Bowl bid.

The bowl game also proved Whitehurst can't carry the offense by himself, so any improvements in the running game should make Whitehurst an even more dangerous passer.

Those improvements must start on an offensive line that returns three starters. Right tackle Gregory Walker has the talent to be Clemson's first NFL Draft choice on the offensive line since 1998, and center Tommy Sharpe is a former walk-on whose determination inspires his teammates.

"We're getting our assignments down," Walker said. "The tight ends are helping us out more on the runs. We've got combination blocks coming in, and we just have faith in the other guys beside us. ... We're growing together, and we're jelling more than we ever did before."

Junior tailback Yusef Kelly, who led Clemson with 520 rushing yards last season, is a big, bruising runner who could star in a more physical offense.

Clemson's talented receivers might not get as many opportunities, but junior receiver Airese Currie expects the Tigers to have an easier time making big plays if the running game becomes more successful.

"We weren't running the ball as effectively as we could, so (defenses) were pretty much playing pass," Currie said. "They were trying to guess pass all the time. I don't think they'll be able to do that this year."

DEFENSE

John Lovett's first season as Clemson's defensive coordinator brought vast improvement to the Tigers' pass defense.

One year after giving up 240.3 passing yards per game, Clemson led the ACC with 21 interceptions and Justin Miller and Brian

Mance emerged as top-notch cornerbacks. Mance was a senior in 2002, but the Tigers have some intriguing options to replace him.

Toure Francis, who opened 2002 as a starter until torn knee ligaments ended his season in the opener at Georgia, will be back on a rehabilitated knee. Tye Hill, a reserve tailback last season, is a sprinter on Clemson's track team who started in Francis' absence during the spring.

"As time goes by, I get more comfortable, and I hope that during the fall I'll be confident and ready to play," Hill said. "If I can lock it down and be good at it, the defense will be really good."

If Hill or somebody else can be almost as good as Miller, who led the ACC with eight interceptions last season, Clemson could play receivers man to man and load up the rest of its defense against the run.

While the offense emphasized the rushing game in the spring, the defense also had an opportunity to work on stopping the run, its biggest shortcoming from 2002. Florida State, Wake Forest and Maryland all rushed for more than 270 yards against the Tigers.

"If we play good against the run and we get them in throwing situations, then I think we're going to be in pretty good shape because we've got some guys that can rush the passer," Lovett said.

Clemson still needs to find a replacement at tackle for Nick Eason, who had seven sacks last season as a senior and was the emotional leader of the defense, but the Tigers have plenty of maturing, experienced talent on the line.

Junior Donnell Washington is a second-year starter at tackle, senior end

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

CB Justin Miller

Emerging Star

QB Charlie Whitehurst

Top Newcomer

WR Kelvin Grant

Khaleed Vaughn it a two-year starter, and linemen J.J. Howard, Maurice Fountain, Eric Coleman and DeJuan Polk bring extensive experience as backups.

New linebackers coach David Blackwell, who moved to Clemson from Pittsburgh, is in charge of the most suspect position group on defense. John Leake, who led the Tigers with 169 tackles last season, starts the sea-

TIGERS SPRING ROSTER

No.	NAME	POS.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN	No.	NAME	POS.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN
93	Gaines Adams	DE	Fr	6-5	240	Greenwood	57	Vontrell Jamison	DE	Jr	6-6	260	Holly Hill
81	Fletcher Anderson	PK	Sr	6-0	165	Columbia	10	Chad Jasmin	FB	Sr	5-10	225	Vacherie, LA
18	Curtis Boham	WR	So	6-1	195	New Orleans, LA	65	Cedric Johnson	OG	Jr	6-4	318	Barwick, GA
86	Charles Bennett	LB	So	6-4	225	Camden	5	Yusef Kelly	RB	Jr	6-0	225	Walterboro
63	Nathan Bennett	OG	Fr	6-5	312	Dallas, GA	45	John Leake	LB	Sr	6-1	225	Plano, TX
28	Kyle Browning	TB	So	5-7	160	Union	77	Brad Lee	OT	Fr	6-4	265	Hephzibah, GA
94	Kevin Burnette	TE	Sr	6-3	240	Potomac Falls, VA	40	Tyrone Lee	FB	Sr	5-11	230	Florence
95	Brandon Cannon	DE	Fr	6-4	240	Stone Mountain, GA	61	John Lively	OG	Jr	6-2	295	Hendersonville, NC
11	Brian Carr	WHIP	Jr	5-11	192	Conyers, GA	80	Todd McClinton	DT	Sr	6-6	295	Columbia
87	Ryan Charpia	WR	Jr	5-9	175	Charleston	13	Gerald McCloud	ROV	Fr	6-2	175	Jacksonville, FL
89	Cole Chason	P/PK	Fr	6-0	155	Roswell, GA	37	Reggie Merriweather	TB	Fr	5-8	195	North Augusta
44	Donnell Clark	DT	Fr	6-2	266	Griffin, GA	13	Stephen McKinney	PK	Sr	6-1	181	Summersville
30	Duane Coleman	TB	So	5-10	185	Naples, FL	9	Justin Miller	CB	So	5-11	180	Owensboro, KY
76	Eric Coleman	DT	Jr	6-5	293	Charlottesville, VA	23	Tavaghin Monts	FS	Jr	6-2	191	Jacksonville, FL
82	Michael Collins	WR	So	6-3	205	Commerce, GA	48	Kelvin Morris	WHIP	Sr	6-4	220	Timmonsville
55	Steve Creed	OG	Jr	6-0	250	Myrtle Beach	64	Chip Myrick	OT	So	6-4	265	Atlanta, GA
1	Airese Currie	WR	Jr	5-11	175	Columbia	49	Roosevelt Nelson	LB	So	6-2	214	Rembert
73	Tim DeBeer	OT	Fr	6-6	280	Atlanta, GA	48	Gene Pate	WR	Jr	6-1	200	Tucker, GA
33	Ronny Delusme	ROV	Jr	6-1	200	Naples, FL	60	Jesse Pickens	OT	Jr	6-5	235	Spartanburg
69	Nick DePrimio	OT	Sr	6-9	295	Chesnee	97	DeJuan Polk	DT	^Gr.	6-2	285	Wadesboro, NC
50	Phillip Dieckmann	C	Jr	6-1	230	Lexington	14	Will Proctor	QB	Fr	6-2	190	Winter Park, FL
31	David Dunham	FB	So	6-2	215	Lake City, FL	29	Travis Pugh	FS	Jr	6-1	190	Manning
83	Tony Elliott	WR	Gr.	6-0	210	Charleston	44	Lionel Richardson	WHIP	Jr	6-0	197	Huger
99	Maurice Fountain	DE	Jr	6-4	240	Camden	54	Geoff Rigbsy	LS	Jr	6-2	216	Greer
26	Touré Francis	CB	Sr	5-11	184	Columbia	53	Tommy Sharpe	C	Jr	6-0	253	Albany, GA
62	Dustin Fry	OT	Fr	6-3	319	Summersville	7	Willie Simmons	QB	^Gr.	6-1	201	Quincy, FL
72	Roman Fry	C	Fr	6-4	260	Ironton, OH	67	Joshua Smith	LS	Sr	6-3	260	Easley
24	Jamaal Fudge	ROV	So	5-10	180	Jacksonville, FL	15	Chansi Stuckey	QB	Fr	6-0	170	Warner Robins, GA
16	Stephen Furr	PK	Jr	6-1	177	Lakeland, FL	92	Trey Tate	DT	So	6-4	265	Gaffney
88	Kelvin Grant	WR	Fr	6-2	205	Camden	85	Ronnie Thomas	WR	Jr	5-11	190	Quincy, FL
21	Derrick Hamilton	WR	Jr	6-4	200	Dillon	35	Kyle Tucker	P/PK	Sr	5-10	155	Cartersville, GA
36	Cliff Harrell	FB	So	6-1	260	Tallahassee, FL	56	Khaled Vaughn	DE	^Gr.	6-4	260	Atlanta, GA
22	Ryan Hemby	CB	Jr	5-10	166	Orangeburg	50	Nigel Vaughn	LB	Jr	6-0	223	Atlanta, GA
70	William Henry	OT	Gr.	6-4	276	Greenville	40	Anthony Waters	LB	Fr	6-3	215	Lake View
43	Leroy Hill	LB	Jr	6-1	205	Haddock, GA	78	Gregory Walker	OT	Sr	6-5	330	Sumter
8	Tye Hill	CB	So	5-10	175	Saint George	96	Donnell Washington	DT	Jr	6-6	315	Beaufort
35	Brandon Holmes	FB	Jr	5-11	190	Woodruff	39	Buddy Williams	CB	Fr	5-11	167	Tallahassee, FL
58	J.J. Howard	DE	Sr	6-3	225	Huger	81	Bobby Williamson	TE	So	6-3	246	Tarpon Springs, FL
19	Aaron Hunt	PK	Sr	5-11	208	Oak Ridge, TN	90	Rod Whipple	TE	So	6-5	201	Toombsboro, GA
80	Thomas Hunter	WR	So	6-4	220	Marion	6	Charlie Whitehurst	QB	So	6-4	206	Duluth, GA
46	Brandon Jamison	LB	Sr	6-1	225	Hopkins	17	Kevin Youngblood	WR	Sr	6-5	219	Jacksonville, FL

2003 PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB	Charlie Whitehurst, So.*/Chansi Stuckey, Fr.
RB	Yusef Kelly, Jr./Reggie Merriweather, Fr.
FB	Chad Jasmin, Sr./Clifford Harrell, So.
FL	Derrick Hamilton, Jr./Airese Currie, Jr.
SE	Kevin Youngblood, Sr./Kelvin Grant, Fr.
TE	Bobby Williamson, So./Kevin Burnette, Sr.
LT	William Henry, Sr./Jesse Pickens, Jr.
LG	Cedric Johnson, Jr./Roman Fry, Fr.
C	Tommy Sharpe, Jr./Dustin Fry, Fr.
RG	Nathan Bennett, Fr./Chip Myrick, So.
RT	Gregory Walker, Sr./Tim DeBeer, Fr.
PK	Aaron Hunt, Sr./Stephen Furr, Jr.

DEFENSE

DE	Khaled Vaughn, Sr./Vontrell Jamison, Jr.
LT	Donnell Washington, Jr./Eric Coleman, Jr.
RT	DeJuan Polk, Sr./Todd McClinton, Sr.
DE	J.J. Howard, Sr./Maurice Fountain, Jr.
LB	John Leake, Sr./Anthony Waters, Fr.
LB	Leroy Hill, Jr./Charles Bennett, So.
LB	Kelvin Morris, Sr./Lionel Richardson, Jr.
CB	Tye Hill, So./Touré Francis, Sr.
CB	Justin Miller, So./Ryan Hemby, Jr.
SS	Jamaal Fudge, So./Gerald McCloud, Fr.
FS	Travis Pugh, Jr./Tavaghin Monts, Jr.
P	Cole Chason, Fr./Kyle Tucker, Sr.

NOTEBOOK

Clemson's most highly touted recruit in 15 years, wide receiver Roscoe Crosby, left the Tigers in the spring to devote his attention to baseball.

Crosby had been trying to play both minor league baseball and football, but decided to withdraw from school in the spring. When Crosby signed in 2001, he became Clemson's first *USA Today* first-team All-America recruit since 1988.

He also signed with the Kansas City Royals for a bonus of \$1.75 million and wound up playing just one season for Clemson. Crosby sat out the 2002 football season while recovering from elbow surgery.

"He just felt like it was best that he try to focus on one sport," said Freda Crosby, Roscoe's mother.

In 2001, Crosby set school freshman records with 27 receptions and 465 receiving yards. Despite Crosby's departure, coach Tommy Bowden said wide receiver remains Clemson's deepest position heading into 2003.

• With sophomore Charlie Whitehurst entrenched as Clemson's starting quarterback, former starter Willie Simmons left the team following spring practice and transferred to Division I-AA Florida A&M.

Simmons, a senior who started eight games last year before losing his job to Whitehurst, is transferring to improve his chances of playing professionally. He already has earned a bachelor's degree.

His loss leaves Clemson with only one experienced quarterback. Redshirt freshmen Chansi Stuckey and Will Proctor will compete for the backup job, but Clemson also signed two high school quarterbacks, C.J. Gaddis and Roy Walker.

• When wide receivers coach Rick Stockstill left Clemson to become the offensive coordinator at East Carolina, Bowden had two staff openings to fill.

Bowden hired former Alabama assistant Dabo Swinney to coach wide receivers. Swinney had been working in real estate for the past two years. Stockstill's duties as recruiting coordinator will be handled by linebackers coach David Blackwell, a former Pittsburgh assistant. The shuffling of the staff caused Bowden to move his brother-in-law, Jack Hines, for the third time in three years. Hines will direct the rover safeties and whip linebackers in 2003.

— Ken Tysiac

CLEMSON

Defense Enjoys Taste of Miller Time

Justin Miller and defensive coordinator John Lovett had a disagreement during the spring about Miller's role on Clemson's defense.

Miller, the cornerback who led the ACC with eight interceptions last season as a freshman, complained that nobody throws to his side of the field anymore.

That, said Lovett, is exactly why Clemson needs to have him out there at cornerback.

Miller, however, would also like to play offense and coach Tommy Bowden has said Miller will be used occasionally as a receiver. But Lovett wanted Miller working on defense during the spring, and for the most part, that's what Miller did.

"I needed him for this spring to bring him back down to earth and get him playing like he can play," Lovett said. "Because the thing we want to do is shut receivers down."

Miller shut down receivers almost without fail last fall, and the confidence he gained is obvious. During one spring workout, Miller cheerfully informed sports information director Tim Bourret that his listed weight needs to be changed from 180 to 195 pounds.

Moments later, when wide receiver Airese Currie sprinted down the sideline for a touchdown, Miller claimed —

appropriately — that that he could have stopped the play short of a first down. Instead, Miller pulled back and let Currie score to avoid causing a ferocious collision that could have injured Currie.

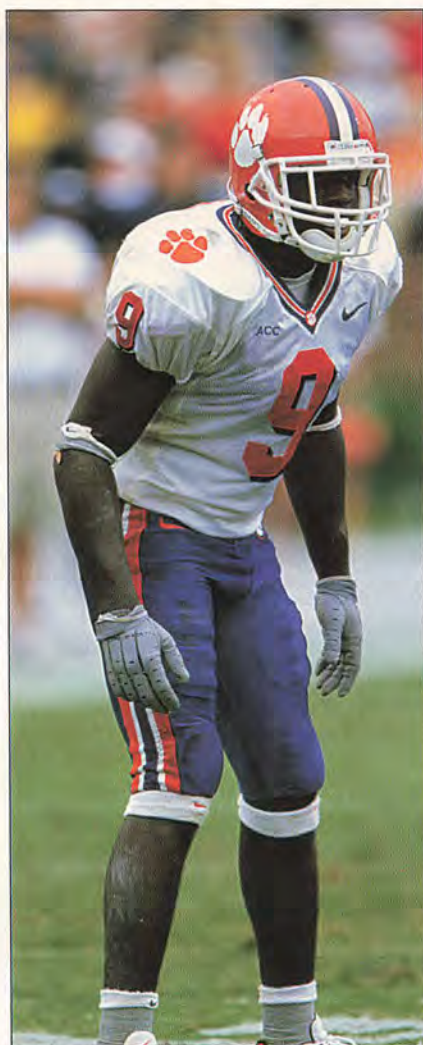
After learning the defense quickly as a freshman, Miller now is instructing teammates on the nuances of playing cornerback.

"I'm comfortable playing," Miller said. "And I can go out there and do what I've got to do. We've got a lot of young guys who are out there now, and I'm talking to them and trying to get them going and at the same time, I'm working on things myself."

Lovett is happy as long as Miller continues working. Miller understands that he possesses incredible talent, but Lovett wants to make sure Miller doesn't believe the hype surrounding his future.

Apparently Lovett doesn't need to worry too much. Miller wasn't happy about his second-team All-ACC selection last season, and that perceived snub keeps him motivated even when opponents don't throw his way.

"I accomplished a lot last year and I let a lot of people know that I can play and I'm capable of doing things out there," Miller said. "Now what I'm doing this year is getting better at the little things." □



JUSTIN MILLER IS A STALWART IN THE TIGER SECONDARY, BUT COULD ALSO SEE ACTION AS A RECEIVER.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

son as an All-ACC candidate. Beyond that, Clemson will rely largely on first-year starters at middle linebacker and "whip" linebacker unless Bowden allows Eric Sampson, who was dismissed last fall, back on the team.

Leake is confident that the familiarity with Lovett's multiple schemes, which utilize three- and four-man fronts, will offset the inexperience.

"We were 10 times better in the spring than we were last year," Leake said. "It may be because we've run the defense for a year. We're just all coming together."

SPECIAL TEAMS

Changes in the kicking game are Clemson's most closely guarded secret heading into the Aug. 30 season opener at Georgia.

Improvement must be certain and immediate for a team that allowed five special teams touchdowns last season. Research dating back to 1951 showed that Clemson

CLEMSON SPENT MUCH OF THE SPRING

HUDDLING AND USING TIGHT ENDS AND FULLBACKS TO DEVELOP TOUGHNESS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BALL.

previously had never given up more than two special teams touchdowns in 52 years.

Although its coverage problems were severe last season, Clemson has capable athletes at many key positions on the special teams.

Senior place-kicker Aaron Hunt is 37 for 50 on field goal attempts in his career. Justin

Miller and Derrick Hamilton are capable of being excellent kick returners, although Hamilton ran laterally too often last season instead of heading upfield. Punter Cole Chason is unproven as a redshirt freshman, but is likely to kick better than Wynn Kopp, who averaged only 37.1 yards per punt last season.

If those players perform as expected and changes on the special teams, offense and defense are successful, the lake level will become a moot point for Bowden. However, Bowden also knows that a third consecutive seven-win season won't earn any job security at Clemson.

"We haven't reached the level that I would like to reach," Bowden said. "My expectations are a lot higher. Clemson is the type of place where bowl games, that's not the objective. It's a certain type of bowl game, plus competing for a championship."

— Ken Tysiac

DUKE **BLUE DEVILS**

When Duke opened the 2002 season with a victory over East Carolina, a tidal wave of emotion spilled out.

The crazed celebration came not only because the Blue Devils snapped the nation's longest losing streak at 23. It also

It was a season of close calls for Duke — somewhat of a welcome sign following back-to-back winless seasons. This season, the Blue Devils are motivated to make amends.

"We lost five games by less than five points last year. We should have gone

debut in 1999, the Blue Devils have enough experience to compete.

"Like Coach tells us, 'We're not a young team anymore,'" wide receiver Lance Johnson said. "We only lost Jamyon and a couple of other guys, and we've basically got our core guys back.

Time, Experience, Effort Must Add Up for Franks

stemmed from the fact that every player except senior Jamyon Small had just won for the first time in a Duke uniform.

A cavalcade of celebrations followed. Unfortunately for the Blue Devils, after that first win they spent most of the season playing the role of victim instead of victor.

Opponents typically take a victory over Duke as a given, but in 2002, many were instead giving thanks. Clemson and Northwestern celebrated after stirring rallies against the Blue Devils.

N.C. State and Virginia breathed deep sighs of relief after holding on for dear life. North Carolina needed a 47-yard field goal on the game's final play to beat Duke.

7-5, but ended up 2-10," defensive tackle Matt Zielinski said. "Expectations are high, and they should be after the year we had last year."

Expectations are also elevated by the fact that except for Small and the unexpected offseason departure of defensive end Shawn Johnson, Duke's team is basically intact from last season. Small was the lone senior in 2002, while Johnson was Duke's lone first-team All-ACC performer, but decided to transfer for his senior season.

Duke has given coach Carl Franks extra time to turn around the program due in part to the staggering level of inexperience on his early teams. But this season, for the first season since Franks'

"So the sky's the limit. We expect bowl games and everything. We expect to come out and just prove everybody wrong."

For that to happen, the Blue Devils must first prove they can win close games. They led East Carolina 23-0 before hanging on for a 23-16 victory, and they manhandled Navy 43-17 for their other victory.

But when games remained in doubt, the Blue Devils seemed to doubt themselves. That's why throughout spring practice, Franks would stop and call for the re-creation of a pivotal play that spelled the difference between winning and losing in 2002.

"This needs to be the year that we win the close games," said Franks, whose team will enter the season with a record 25-game losing streak in ACC games. "We've put ourselves back in the same situations we had last year to see that we can be successful at executing it.

"If we don't execute it the first time, we'll go back and do it again, but normally we've been executing it pretty well. ... It's a matter of building confidence in what you're able to do."

That confidence won't truly come until Duke wins a close game for real. The question that remains is whether the Blue Devils have the talent to win.

Franks has made slow but steady strides in his attempt to deepen the pool of talent at his alma mater. A \$20-million football facility opened last year, helping recruiting. It also helps when the administration occasionally loosens the stringent

at a glance

2002: 2-10 overall; 0-8 ACC (9th)

COACH: Carl Franks — At Duke and overall: 5-40, 4 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 22;

11 offense, 9 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: RB Alex Wade, RB Chris Douglas, WR Khary Sharpe, LT Drew Strojny, DT Matt Zielinski, LB Ryan Fowler, LB Brendan Dewan

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: This is Duke's most experienced team under Franks.

The running game could be strong with bruiser Alex Wade and speedster Chris Douglas both capable of 1,000-yard seasons and every offensive linemen on the roster returning from last season.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: The passing

game hasn't shown much explosiveness, and the pass defense has repeatedly imploded in the past. Both speak to the overall team speed, which is getting better, but remains behind the ACC curve.

OVERVIEW: The Blue Devils made steady strides over each of the past two seasons but own just two victories to show for it. This season, with a soft non-conference schedule and a manageable conference slate, the close losses of the recent past must become victories for Franks to keep his job. Three winnable non-conference games along with three ACC wins would make the Blue Devils bowl-eligible. An improved pass defense is crucial to those hopes.

BLUE DEVILS

LINEBACKER RYAN FOWLER HAS LED THE BLUE DEVILS IN TACKLES FOR THREE CONSECUTIVE SEASONS.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER



BLUE DEVILS RECRUITING

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
ADAMS, Dean WR	6-2, 190	Greensboro	Smith
Three-time All-Conference ♦ As a senior, had over 1,200 yards passing and 15 touchdowns ♦ Had 800 yards rushing and 13 touchdowns ♦ Had 39 receptions for 889 yards and 10 touchdowns as a junior ♦ Returned two kickoffs and one punt for touchdowns ♦ Student Body President.			
CAMERO, Casey DE	6-5, 235	Tampa, FL	Jesuit
Enrolled in January ♦ Attended Wyoming Seminary Prep in fall 2002 ♦ Team captain ♦ Led team in tackles for loss (18) and quarterback sacks (7) ♦ Third-team prep All-State ♦ Had 83 tackles and 17 quarterback sacks as a senior.			
EDWARDS, Jeremy S	6-0, 175	Jackson, NJ	Jackson Memorial
Rated No. 24 player in New Jersey by Rivals.com ♦ SuperPrep ranked No. 30 player in New Jersey ♦ TheInsiders.com ranked No. 86 cornerback nationally ♦ All-State ♦ As a senior, had 90 tackles, two interceptions and two fumbles recovered ♦ Had 1,350 yards rushing and 15 touchdowns ♦ Had 85 tackles and four interceptions as a junior.			
FEINBERG, Alex K	6-1, 185	Thomasville, GA	Thomasville
Rated No. 4 kicker nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Southeast Region ♦ Ranked No. 49 player in Georgia by SuperPrep ♦ Team captain ♦ Made five of nine field goal attempts and 41 of 43 points after touchdown as a senior ♦ As a sophomore, made school-record field goal of 52 yards ♦ Three-year letterman in soccer.			
FRYER, Aaron RB	5-11, 205	Tampa, FL	Jesuit
Rivals.com ranked No. 29 running back nationally ♦ PrepStar All-Southeast Region ♦ Rated No. 45 player in Florida by SuperPrep ♦ As a senior, had 2,023 yards rushing and 26 touchdowns ♦ Had 1,553 yards rushing and 16 touchdowns as a junior ♦ Had 5,299 career yards rushing on 770 attempts, scoring 59 touchdowns ♦ Four-year letterman.			
MASON, Cedric CB	6-0, 185	College Park, GA	Riverdale
Rated No. 106 wide receiver nationally by TheInsiders.com ♦ All-Region wide receiver ♦ All-County defensive back ♦ Had 33 receptions for 505 yards and eight touchdowns as a senior ♦ Had 75 tackles and four interceptions ♦ As a junior, had 24 receptions for 425 yards and four touchdowns.			
MASON, Garrett OL	6-6, 285	McAllen, TX	McAllen
Honorable mention All-State ♦ All-District ♦ Two-year starter ♦ As a senior, averaged six pancake blocks per game ♦ Second in district in discus.			

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
MAURIDES, Zach OL	6-6, 250	Glenview, IL	Glenbrook South
All-Conference ♦ All-Area ♦ Two-time Most Valuable Player ♦ Team captain ♦ Did not allow a quarterback sack in final two prep seasons ♦ Member of wrestling team.			
MOORE, Christopher DE	6-6, 240	Burnsville, MN	St. Thomas Academy
Rivals.com ranked No. 30 strongside defensive end nationally and No. 6 player in Minnesota ♦ PrepStar All-Midwest Region ♦ Rated No. 60 player in Midwest Region by SuperPrep ♦ All-State ♦ Had 87 tackles and five quarterback sacks as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 55 tackles, seven quarterback sacks and four fumbles caused ♦ Three-year letterman.			
SOBEL, Corey LB	6-0, 200	Potomac, MD	DeMatha Catholic
Rated No. 55 inside linebacker nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ SuperPrep ranked No. 4 linebacker and No. 23 player in Mid-Atlantic Region ♦ Two-time All-State ♦ As a senior, had 115 tackles, eight quarterback sacks and three interceptions ♦ Had 164 tackles and six quarterback sacks as a junior.			
STEFANOW, Nick TE	6-5, 215	Wheeling, WV	Wheeling Park
Rated No. 51 tight end nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-East Region ♦ SuperPrep ranked No. 27 player in Mid-Atlantic Region ♦ TheInsiders.com ranked No. 49 tight end nationally ♦ Had 29 receptions for 425 yards and six touchdowns as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 16 receptions and four touchdowns ♦ Had 11 quarterback sacks.			
TALLEY, John CB	5-11, 170	Duncan, SC	Byrnes
Rated No. 5 defensive back nationally and No. 29 player in South Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ As a senior, had 62 tackles, eight passes broken up and three interceptions, including two returned for touchdowns ♦ Member of basketball team.			
TAPPS, Brandon S	5-11, 185	Garland, TX	Garland
All-City ♦ All-District ♦ Helped team to region championship as a senior ♦ Had 82 tackles, two interceptions and three fumbles recovered ♦ As a junior, had 97 tackles and one interception.			
WILLIAMS, Alex LB	6-0, 215	Dublin, GA	West Laurens
Rivals.com ranked No. 22 inside linebacker nationally and No. 27 player in Georgia ♦ Dublin Courier-Herald Central Georgia Player of the Year ♦ Four-year starter ♦ As a senior, had 123 tackles and three interceptions ♦ Had 116 tackles and five quarterback sacks as a junior ♦ Regional champion in long jump as a junior ♦ Member of basketball team.			

A LOOK AT THE BLUE DEVILS

RESULTS

(2-10, 0-8)

23	EAST CAROLINA	16
3	LOUISVILLE	40
21	at Northwestern	26
17	at Florida State	48
43	at Navy	17
22	VIRGINIA	27
10	at Wake Forest	36
22	at North Carolina State	24
12	MARYLAND	45
31	CLEMSON	34
2	at Georgia Tech	17
21	NORTH CAROLINA	23

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	ATT	COMP	YARDS	PCT	TD	INT
Smith	308	174	2031	56.5	12	9
Dapolito	68	26	295	38.2	4	4

RUSHING

NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD
Wade	176	845	4.9	43	4
Douglas	131	640	4.9	46	2
Landrum	16	150	9.4	69	1
Dapolito	38	88	2.3	29	1

RECEIVING

NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD
Sharpe	30	458	15.3	54	6
Landrum	29	294	10.1	36	3
Roland	22	344	15.6	41	2
Johnson	21	230	11.0	26	2

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Tackles: Fowler 145, Smith 106, Johnson 73.
Interceptions: Green 3, Smith 3.
Sacks: Johnson 12, Harris 4.
Tackles for Loss: Johnson 19.5, Zielinski 18.5, Fowler 15.

SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	at Virginia
Sept. 6	WESTERN CAROLINA
Sept. 13	RICE
Sept. 20	NORTHWESTERN
Sept. 27	FLORIDA STATE
Oct. 11	at Maryland
Oct. 18	WAKE FOREST
Oct. 25	NORTH CAROLINA STATE
Nov. 1	at Tennessee
Nov. 8	GEORGIA TECH
Nov. 15	at Clemson
Nov. 22	at North Carolina



**KHARY SHARPE TIED FOR THIRD
IN THE ACC WITH SIX TOUCHDOWN
RECEPTIONS IN 2002.**

PHOTO BY TOMASSO DEROSA

academic standards required of recruits.

Franks says that each of his recruiting classes has been better than the previous one, and he has improved Duke's chances of winning by softening the schedule to include a Division I-AA team each of the next three seasons.

The overall talent level still lags behind most ACC schools, but this team appears to be talented enough to make things interesting. It helps that the non-conference schedule features Western Carolina, Rice and Northwestern at home, although it also includes a trip to Tennessee.

"Coach always makes the point that we may not be the most talented or the strongest team, but we can be the most disciplined team," safety Terrell Smith said. "We can overcome a lot with great effort."

OFFENSE

The defense benefited from a new coordinator in 2002. Now the offense is looking for the same in 2003.

Franks ran the offense in the past, but relinquished those duties to Jim Pry, Duke's quarterbacks coach.

Franks tried to downplay the significance of the shift, calling it an administrative move, but some of his players certainly saw some benefits in the spring.

"It's just a lot more comfortable for us," Lance Johnson said. "It's just a lot

easier for us because we've got one guy to relate to. It's not two different guys calling plays for us now.

"Since we're with Coach Pry all the time, there's a one-on-one connection with him. So we can come off the sideline and go right up to Coach Pry and be like, 'Coach, we need to run this route because it's wide open.' And then we'll come back on the field and he'll call it for us, and it will be there."

Johnson is a blossoming backup receiver in a group headed by speedsters Senterrio Landrum and Khary Sharpe. Landrum opened Duke's spring game with a 97-yard kickoff return for a touchdown. Also, former basketball player Reggie Love, who led the team in receiving last year until a midseason injury ended his season, showed he was healthy with seven catches for 128 yards.

Tight end remains an important part in Duke's passing game. Andy Roland and Calen Powell return after combining to catch 42 passes for 603 yards and two touchdowns. Ben Patrick, a redshirt freshman, also could get his hands on a few balls.

The receivers will again catch passes from quarterback Adam Smith and occasionally from Chris Dapolito, who were both solid in their first significant college action in 2002. Smith, who separated himself from Dapolito as the primary quarterback as the season went along, matched the school record for touchdown passes by a sophomore with 12.

The strength of the offense will again be the running game, led by seniors Alex Wade and Chris Douglas. Wade bulled his way to almost 1,000 yards last year when injuries to Douglas opened the door, while the speedy Douglas needs just 72 yards to set the school record for all-purpose yardage.

This year, with an offensive line anchored by 300-pound captain Drew Strojny, Wade and Douglas are likely to play together in the same backfield more often.

"I love to do whatever moves the football," said Franks, a pass-first guy when he was an assistant under Steve Spurrier at Florida. "If running moves the football more, then that's what we're going to do.

"You have to adjust to what you do best. ... With Alex Wade and all the offensive linemen coming back, we're going to make sure we run the football."

DEFENSE

Effort worked wonders for the defense last season — a defense that set an ACC record for points allowed in 2001, but showed significant improvement last season under first-year coordinator Ted Roof,

formerly at Georgia Tech.

Roof brought a much-needed aggressiveness to the defense, which rose from 113th in the nation against the run in 2001 to 28th in 2002. Duke also led the ACC in rushing defense, and ranked third in sacks.

Those most responsible for that turnaround are back in the lineup, with one notable exception. Shawn Johnson, who came out of nowhere to lead the ACC in sacks and tackles for loss last season, asked for a release from his scholarship for his senior season so he could transfer.

Johnson and Franks reportedly didn't see eye to eye, and Franks called Johnson's departure "inevitable and probably in the best interests of everyone involved."

With the experience of Matt Zielinski and emerging young players such as Micah Harris and Orrin Thompson along the front, the Blue Devils seem to think they can absorb Johnson's departure.

"Losing Shawn was unexpected, but we've got a defense right now that's going to rally around that position," said Zielinski, who ranked third in the ACC in tackles for loss in 2002. "We've put a guy out there (in Harris) that's going to make the same plays.

"Defensively, we're really happy about the effort. We go in and watch film after a scrimmage, and we've got four, five, six guys headed to the ball. We

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

**LB Ryan Fowler
Emerging Star**

**LB Brendan Dewan
Top Newcomer**

RB Aaron Fryer

might have a missed tackle or two, but we've got so many guys coming after it and coming after the ballcarrier that even if you miss a tackle, they're not going to gain many yards after it."

The linebackers look strong as well, with Ryan Fowler set to start for the fourth consecutive season (he could become Duke's all-time tackle leader) and Brendan Dewan returning following an explosive freshman season.

The secondary, however, remains a primary concern for the Blue Devils. Every player who saw significant time in the defensive backfield last season is back, but that

BLUE DEVILS SPRING ROSTER

No	NAME	Pos	CLASS	Ht	Wt	HOMETOWN	No	NAME	Pos	CLASS	Ht	Wt	HOMETOWN
6	Dean Adams	WR	Fr	6-2	190	Greensboro	58	Cody Lowe	LB	Fr	6-2	230	Houston, TX
13	Giuseppe Aguanno	LB	Jr	6-1	235	Staten Island, NY	88	Eric Lyon	WR	Fr	6-2	190	Charlotte
48	Phillip Alexander	DE	Jr	6-4	235	Bronx, NY	97	David Martin	DE	So	6-4	240	Piano, TX
77	Lavdrim Bauta	OL	Fr	6-5	275	Brooklyn, NY	24	Cedric Mason	CB	Fr	6-0	185	College Park, GA
70	Luke Bayer	C	Sr	6-5	290	Gainesville, FL	72	Garrett Mason	OL	Fr	6-6	285	McAllen, TX
92	Bob Benion	DL	So	6-3	270	Milton, PA	76	Zach Maurides	OL	Fr	6-6	250	Glenview, IL
73	Chris Best	OG	So	6-5	270	Calgary, Alberta	36	Deonto McCormick	DB	So	5-10	180	Adel, GA
61	Joe Boniewicz	OG	Jr	6-4	290	Dunmore, PA	18	Trey McDonald	P	Jr	6-2	215	Oak Ridge, TN
26	Matt Brooks	P/PK	Jr	6-1	190	Miami, FL	65	Christian Mitchell	OT	Jr	6-7	315	Amherst, NY
34	Derek Bryant	WR	Fr	6-3	200	Richmond, VA	78	Dan Mooney	C	Jr	6-5	290	Bay Village, OH
11	Von Bryant	TB	Fr	6-0	205	Turnersville, NJ	99	Christopher Moore	DL	Fr	6-6	240	Burnsville, MS
51	Casey Camero	DE	Fr	6-5	235	Tampa, FL	79	Jim Moravchik	OT	So	6-6	300	Sun Prairie, WI
93	Steve Campbell	DB	So	6-1	220	Chagrin Falls, OH	52	Eli Nichols	DE	Fr	6-5	235	Crawfordville, FL
81	Paul Campitelli	DT	Fr	6-3	245	Dunkirk, MD	49	Shaun Noonan	K	So	6-2	215	Mahaw, NY
45	J.T. Cape	LB	Jr	6-4	235	Watkinsville, GA	40	Zach Novak	FB	Jr	6-2	240	Wyoming, Ohio
47	Seth Carter	LS	Sr	6-4	245	Oklahoma City, OK	83	Ben Patrick	TE	Fr	6-4	250	Savannah, GA
98	Drew Czapinski	DT	Jr	6-5	255	Charlotte	87	Colen Powell	TE	Jr	6-5	245	Bellevue, WA
9	Chris Dapolito	QB	Jr	6-3	215	Matawan, NJ	89	Andy Roland	TE	So	6-4	220	West Lawn, PA
33	Cedric Dargan	TB	So	6-0	200	Jacksonville	22	Malcolm Ruff	LB	So	6-1	225	Baltimore, MD
30	Brendan Dewan	LB	So	6-2	210	Austin, TX	53	Jim Scharrer	DE	Jr	6-4	240	Erie, PA
4	Chris Douglas	TB	Sr	6-0	190	Sherrills Ford	7	Mike Schneider	QB	Fr	6-3	215	Sharon, PA
31	Mike Dowling	FB	Fr	6-2	240	Baltimore, MD	12	Darryl Scott	WR	Jr	6-3	210	Voorhees, NJ
95	Joel East	DE	Fr	6-4	235	Cambridge, OH	2	Khary Sharpe	WR	Jr	5-11	175	Voorhees, NJ
39	Jeremy Edwards	S	Fr	6-0	175	Jackson, NJ	16	Adam Smith	QB	Jr	6-5	205	Orinda, CA
28	Ronnie Elliott	WR	So	5-9	185	Huntsville, AL	25	Terrell Smith	S	Sr	5-11	180	Wingate
14	Alex Feinberg	K	Fr	6-1	185	Thomasville, GA	42	Corey Sabel	LB	Fr	6-0	200	Potomac, MD
85	Kendral Felder	WR	Fr	6-3	170	Wilson	3	Kenneth Stanford	CB	Jr	5-9	180	Detroit, MI
27	Ryan Fowler	LB	Sr	6-4	235	Redington Shores, FL	80	Nick Stefanow	TE	Fr	6-5	215	Wheeling, WV
32	Aaron Fryer	TB	Fr	5-11	205	Tampa, FL	75	Drew Strojny	OT	Sr	6-8	300	Wrentham, MA
1	Brent Garber	K	Sr	6-1	195	Thomasville, GA	38	John Talley	CB	Fr	5-11	170	Duncan, SC
20	Temo George	CB	Sr	5-9	180	Havelock	8	Brandon Tapps	S	Fr	5-11	185	Garland, TX
17	Alex Green	S	Jr	6-2	190	Hyattsville, MD	46	Mark Thompson	S	So	6-3	200	Moorestown, NJ
23	Brian Greene	CB	So	6-1	185	Kennesaw, GA	91	Orrin Thompson	DT	Jr	6-7	285	Charlotte
63	Andrew Guidry	OL	So	5-11	235	Salem, VA	37	Alex Wade	TB	Sr	6-1	255	Newtown, PA
55	Micah Harris	DE	Jr	6-4	240	Poland, OH	90	Demetrius Warrick	DT	So	6-7	275	Wilmington, DE
82	Lance Johnson	WR	Jr	6-1	205	Hickory	29	DeAndre White	DB	So	6-0	200	Suffolk, VA
15	John-Paul Kimbrough	CB	So	5-11	195	Hendersonville	19	Mark Wigal	WR	So	5-10	190	Morgantown, WV
44	William Kimmitt	LB	So	6-3	210	Arlington, VA	43	Alex Williams	LB	Fr	6-0	215	Dublin, GA
41	Justin Kitchen	LB	So	6-4	215	Charlotte	57	Birkens Williams	LB	Fr	6-4	220	Hol Springs, AR
86	Ben Kittleson	WR	So	6-0	180	Buckner, KY	54	Kevin Wilson	DL	Fr	6-2	250	Riversdale, GA
66	Tyler Krieg	OL	Fr	6-5	255	Tualatin, OR	68	Rusty Wilson	OG	Sr	6-3	330	Britton, Mich.
21	Senterrio Landrum	WR	Jr	5-9	185	Sweet Water, AL	10	Chris Wiselwey	QB	Jr	6-5	220	Pompton Plains, NJ
74	Daryl Lewis	OG	Sr	6-3	330	Tuscaloosa, AL	5	C.J. Woodard	DB	So	6-0	175	Henderson
84	Reggie Love	WR	Sr	6-4	225	Charlotte	35	Matt Zielinski	DT	Sr	6-3	290	East Amherst, NY

2003 PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB	Adam Smith, Jr.*/Chris Dapolito, Jr.
TB	Chris Douglas, Sr.*/Cedric Dargan, So.
FB	Alex Wade, Sr.*/Zach Novak, Jr.
WR	Senterrio Landrum, Jr.*/Lance Johnson, Jr.
WR	Khary Sharpe, Jr.*/Reggie Love, Sr.
TE	Andy Roland, So.*/Colen Powell, Jr.
LT	Drew Strojny, Sr.*/Jim Moravchik, So.
LG	Daryl Lewis, Sr.*/Joe Boniewicz, Jr.
C	Luke Bayer, Sr.*/Dan Mooney, Jr.
RG	Rusty Wilson, Sr.*/Lavdrim Bauta, Fr.
RT	Christian Mitchell, Jr.*/Chris Best, So.
K	Brent Garber, Sr.*/Matt Brooks, Jr.

DEFENSE

DE	Micah Harris, Jr.*/Eli Nichols, Fr.
DT	Matt Zielinski, Sr.*/Bob Benion, So.
DT	Orrin Thompson, Jr.*/Demetrius Warrick, So.
DE	Phillip Alexander, Jr.*/Jim Scharrer, Jr.
LB	Giuseppe Aguanno, Jr.*/Malcolm Ruff, So.
LB	Ryan Fowler, Sr.*/Cody Lowe, Fr.
LB	Brendan Dewan, So.*/DeAndre White, So.
CB	Kenneth Stanford, Jr.*/Temo George, Sr.
CB	Deonto McCormick, So.*/Brian Greene, So.*
SS	Terrell Smith, Sr.*/C.J. Woodard, So.
FS	Alex Green, Jr.*/Mark Thompson, So.
P	Trey McDonald, Jr.*/Matt Brooks, Jr.

NOTEBOOK

The Blue Devils are as deep as they've been at running back in recent years, which allowed them to move two players from the backfield to the defensive side of the ball.

Malcolm Ruff, who carried 17 times for 70 yards as a true freshman last season, moved to linebacker in the spring, while Von Bryant moved to cornerback. Ruff impressed the coaches in the spring, moving up to second string on the depth chart. Bryant also showed potential, coming up with an interception in a late-spring scrimmage.

"I think Malcolm Ruff is doing outstanding ... and Von Bryant has done some good things," Franks said. "There are a lot of running backs right now ... and we just thought they could get on the field so much quicker."

• Senior receiver Reggie Love was Duke's leading receiver when a knee injury ended his season nine games into the 2002 season. In the spring, Love picked up where he left off, finishing with a seven-catch, 128-yard performance in the spring game.

Love has endured an up-and-down career, both on and off the field. In addition to the injury, Love was charged with driving under the influence following his sophomore season. The charge eventually was dismissed.

Also as a sophomore, Love was suspended from the basketball team for an undisclosed violation of team rules and then didn't return for his junior season.

"He's shown a great deal of maturity," Franks said. "He had some adversity, but we hung with him and now he's having a lot of success."

"He's got to carry it on into next season."

• Due in part to All-ACC defensive end Shawn Johnson's decision to transfer, Duke moved three players to the defensive line during the spring. Juniors Phillip Alexander and Jim Scharrer spent time at defensive end, and Paul Campitelli moved from tight end to defensive tackle.

• Demetrius Warrick, a potential starter at defensive tackle, missed spring practice following knee surgery. The secondary practiced without Brian Greene and Deonto McCormick and walk-on Steve Campbell because of surgeries, and linebacker J.T. Cape sat out following offseason surgery.

— Bryan Strickland

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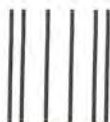
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Wade Learns He's Better Than Useful

After the 2002 season, running back Alex Wade was chosen Duke's Most Valuable Player.

Before the season, though, Wade felt like the team's Most Invisible Player.

It's hard to miss Wade, a 255-pound senior power runner, but he felt the Blue Devils were missing out on his talent. That's why Wade seriously considered transferring.

"I thought of leaving," Wade said. "I was just wondering what the point was of me taking up a spot if I wasn't playing."

"The most important thing in life — whether you're playing football or working at a restaurant — is to feel useful, and I didn't feel useful here."

Wade arrived at Duke the same time as talented tailback Chris Douglas, who received most of the carries in 2000 and 2001. To make matters worse, with Duke losing all its games, there weren't that many carries to go around while the Blue Devils played catch-up.

After talking to Duke coach Carl Franks, who reminded Wade that he had been limited by injuries and assured Wade that he'd get the ball

more as Duke became more competitive, Wade decided to stick it out.

It's a good thing he did.

A nagging ankle injury slowed Douglas throughout the 2002 season, and Wade didn't waste any time blasting through the opening. In Duke's season-opening victory against East Carolina, a win that ended the nation's longest losing streak at 23, Wade got the ball almost more than he could handle.

Wade carried 24 times for 109 yards against ECU, including nine consecutive carries late in the game, to help stop the streak.

More outstanding games followed. Wade finished the season with 979 yards rushing, including a school-record-matching six games of 100 yards or more.

This season, even if Douglas stays healthy, defenses can expect a healthy dose of Wade.

"We do want to increase some formations and get both the threat of Alex Wade and Chris Douglas, having both of them in the backfield at the same time," first-year offensive coordinator Jim Pry said. "That's the next step in this offense." □



TAILBACK ALEX WADE HAS MADE THE MOST OF HIS OPPORTUNITIES.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

group again ranked last in the ACC in passing yards allowed.

Among the defensive backs, Terrell Smith ranked second on the team in tackles with 106 and led the ACC with four fumble recoveries, and Kenneth Stanford was chosen as the team's most outstanding defensive back for 2002.

"At times they've struggled a little bit," Franks said. "But at times they covered the receivers very well."

"I was very pleased to see we played the middle of the field better (during spring practice) than we did last year. We still have to work on some man coverage on the outside."

SPECIAL TEAMS

Special teams provided a rare bright spot during Duke's back-to-back winless seasons in 2000-01, but they weren't so special last season.

Kicker Brent Garber showed off his strong leg at times, but remained inconsis-

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**NFORTUNATELY
FOR THE BLUE
DEVILS, AFTER**

**THAT FIRST WIN THEY SPENT
MOST OF THE SEASON
PLAYING THE ROLE OF VICTIM
INSTEAD OF VICTOR.**

tent. Punter Trey McDonald averaged less than 40 yards a kick. The return teams stumbled in and out of turmoil.

In the offseason, Franks hired Don Yanowski away from East Carolina to try to remedy the problems. With essentially the same special-teams personnel that Duke relied on in 2001, Yanowski has the tools to turn things around.

"He's brought in a higher intensity level,

and everybody likes that," said Terrell Smith, a valuable special teams contributor when he's not playing safety. "He's my third special teams coach and he's by far the most intense."

"You look at other teams (that have good special teams) and everybody wants to play special teams. Before, there were guys who didn't want to play on special teams, but now everybody wants an opportunity to play."

Special teams can make the difference in close games, and the Blue Devils know a thing or two about close games. They know they better win them this season, or the contract extension Franks received after last season could turn into a pink slip after this one.

"We definitely have to win the close ones," Johnson said. "It starts right up there in the locker room."

"We've just got to get together because we're only as strong as our weakest man."

— Bryan Strickland





FLORIDA STATE

SEMINOLES

Back when the victories seemed automatic, ACC titles were assumed and national title runs were a yearly boom-or-bust mission, Bobby Bowden often warned of reality.

"Remember, nothing lasts forever," Bowden would say.

The Seminoles took some positive steps in the spring. They started by settling a thorny quarterback issue when Chris Rix performed as desired, both on the field and inside the locker room.

Playmakers emerged among the new receivers, Robinson included, and fewer

of a once-anointed quarterback (Adrian McPherson). The bizarre took daily twists. Meanwhile, the esprit de corps took daily hits.

When the Seminoles begin preseason practice in August, Bowden vows to monitor any sign of a fragmented team.

Can They Just 'Shut Up and Play?'

And, finally, he has been proven to be right.

In the past two seasons, the Seminoles lost more games (9) than they lost the previous six years. They've lost in all sorts of weather, all types of venues. Their once invincible aura has been eliminated.

More headlines have come from missteps off the field than any strides on it.

In fact, this season, for the first time, the Seminoles are not even perceived as the team to beat in their own conference. It used to be that everyone else in the ACC would debate about second-place.

The number one question as summer gives way to a new season is so different: Can Florida State get it back?

"We can, but we are a long way from it," junior receiver Dominic Robinson said. "We definitely can get there, because the talent is there, the potential is there, we just have to get that work ethic."

Work ethic? That used to be driven home with fear. FSU teams didn't want to fail their predecessors. The standard was high — one loss considered too many — and no player wanted to be part of something that let tradition erode.

"Those guys were winning and they had to live up to what just left," Robinson said. "Since I've been here, we really haven't had something to live up to, other than something that was here before we arrived."

"That's what we're trying to get back to."

passes were left unclaimed. Replacements on the offensive line held up better than expected.

Though minus half the starting defense, which was hardest hit with injuries from last season, there was still enough contribution from assorted newcomers to think it could be effective.

Problems aside, the Seminoles are still the defending ACC champions, and they expect to be better than they were last season.

"I see a lot of positives," Bowden said. "It's the makings of a real good football team, if now we can just stay healthy."

Florida State also has to heal itself emotionally. This team has gone through a tumultuous two years, facing everything from the death of a player (linebacker Devaughn Darling), to gambling allegations

"We won't put up with the negative," Bowden said. "As soon as we spot a negative, we'll get rid of it. We cannot afford to have that."

"So far, the attitude of the kids has been real good and we'll do our best to maintain it. We were a team pulled apart last year. We still had the talent. The kids still worked hard. They still practiced hard."

"But the fact was, we simply were not together. The chemistry was not as good as it has been. I felt there have been two times in my career, my 50 years of coaching, where I had teams where the kids did not have the camaraderie you want."

"Once was at West Virginia (1974), and then last year."

By bringing in former star players to

at a glance

SEMINOLES

2002: 9-5 overall, 7-1 ACC (1st)

COACH: Bobby Bowden — At FSU: 259-64-4, 27 years; Overall: 332-96-4, 38 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 15; 4 offense, 10 defense, kicker

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Chris Rix, TB Greg Jones, TB Lorenzo Booker, WR Craphonso Thorpe, LB Michael Boulware, DE Kamerion Wimbley, DT Darnell Dockett

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: Rarely do teams return 10 defensive starters. As a bonus, the Seminoles' linebacker corps and defensive tackles all have three years of playing experience. The same is true with

quarterback Chris Rix, with 22 starts.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: The offensive line has to be rebuilt with four new starters. There isn't a proven playmaker at receiver. More than anything, however, this team has to prove it can recapture the intensity and common resolve it lost somewhere in the past two seasons.

OVERVIEW: With a favorable early-season schedule, this team could get into mid-October unbeaten and surging with confidence. However, so much depends on whether Rix can regain favor and fulfill his talent potential, and whether his teammates have the right mindset to eliminate a recent trend of

CORNERBACK BRYANT MCFADDEN TIED FOR THE TEAM LEAD WITH THREE INTERCEPTIONS IN 2002.

PHOTO BY TOMASSO DEROSA

For more coverage of the Seminoles, visit www.floridastate.rivals.com

SEMINOLES RECRUITING

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
ANDERSON, Chris DL	6-3, 295	Jacksonville	Hargrave Military Acad.
Rivals.com rated No. 34 non-high school player nationally ♦ Ranked No. 11 prep player in Florida by SuperPrep ♦ Florida Times-Union rated No. 1 defensive tackle in Florida ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ As a senior, had 22 quarterback sacks ♦ Had 27 quarterback sacks as a junior.			
BOSTON, Alex DE	6-3, 225	Bartow	Bartow
Ranked No. 8 weekside defensive end nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Had 65 tackles and 12 quarterback sacks as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 15 quarterback sacks ♦ Rated No. 72 baseball player nationally by Team One Baseball.			
BRADWELL, Chris DL	6-5, 265	Alpharetta, GA	Hargrave Military Acad.
Rivals.com rated No. 36 non-high school player nationally ♦ Returned a kickoff 85 yards for a touchdown ♦ Ranked No. 17 prep defensive tackle in Georgia by SuperPrep ♦ As a senior, had 85 tackles and 11 quarterback sacks ♦ Had eight receptions for 150 yards ♦ Had 70 tackles, including 37 solo, nine tackles for loss and six quarterback sacks as a junior.			
CROMARTIE, Antonio CB	6-3, 200	Tallahassee	Lincoln
Parade All-American ♦ USA Today All-American and Defensive Player of the Year ♦ Ranked No. 6 cornerback nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Had 30 receptions for 642 yards and six touchdowns as a senior ♦ Had 242 yards rushing and three touchdowns on 13 carries ♦ Returned two kickoffs and two punt returns for touchdowns ♦ Had 53 tackles and six interceptions ♦ As a junior, helped team to state championship ♦ Averaged 14 points and nine rebounds per game as forward for basketball team.			
DAVIS, Chauncey DE	6-2, 260	Auburndale	Jones Junior College
Rivals.com rated No. 11 juco player nationally ♦ As a freshman, had 65 tackles and 12 tackles for loss ♦ Rivals.com All-American ♦ Prep All-State ♦ Atlanta Journal-Constitution Super Southern 100 ♦ Florida Times-Union Super 75 ♦ Had almost 1,000 yards rushing as a senior.			
DICKSON, Clifton DL	6-5, 285	Miami	Northwestern
Ranked No. 21 defensive tackle nationally by Rivals.com ♦ As a senior, had 116 tackles, 21 quarterback sacks, three fumbles caused and six fumbles recovered ♦ Had 115 tackles, 21 tackles for loss and 16 quarterback sacks as a junior.			
FAGG, DeCody WR	6-3, 185	Quincy	Shanks
Rivals.com rated No. 15 wide receiver nationally and No. 27 player in Florida ♦ All-State ♦ Class 2A Player of the Year ♦ Had 41 receptions for 808 yards and 11 touchdowns as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 29 receptions for 585 yards.			
FLUELLEN, Andre DL	6-4, 270	Cartersville, GA	Cartersville
Ranked No. 28 defensive tackle nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Played offense and defense ♦ As a senior, had 93 tackles and 11 quarterback sacks ♦ Had 88 tackles, 10 quarterback sacks, six fumbles caused and scored two touchdowns.			

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
FRADY, John OL	6-4, 275	Jacksonville	Bolles
Rivals.com rated No. 8 offensive guard nationally ♦ Helped team to state title ♦ Had 108 pancake blocks as a senior ♦ All-State and All-First Coast as a junior ♦ Expected to play offensive guard at Florida State.			
GOGGANS, Chase K	5-9, 160	Douglas, GA	Coffee County
Ranked No. 1 kicker nationally and Top 50 in Georgia by Rivals.com ♦ Three-time All-Region ♦ Had 15 career field goals over 40 yards ♦ As a senior, made 14 of 18 field goal attempts and 17 of 17 points after touchdown ♦ Made nine field goals over 40 yards, including a career-long 54-yarder.			
HENDERSON, Mario OL	6-6, 330	Lehigh	Lehigh
Rivals.com rated among Top 40 offensive guards nationally ♦ All-District ♦ All-Region ♦ Averaged 14 points and 11 rebounds per game as center for basketball team.			
KELLY, Anthony LB	6-3, 225	Daytona Beach	Seabreeze
Had 150 tackles and six quarterback sacks as a senior ♦ Missed entire junior year after suffering a knee injury ♦ Played linebacker and defensive end.			
MCAROEY, Jhermaine CB	6-2, 170	Pensacola	Pensacola Senior
Ranked among Top 50 cornerbacks nationally by Rivals.com ♦ As a senior, had 62 tackles and five interceptions ♦ Did not allow a TD all season ♦ Allowed only six completed passes ♦ Allowed three receptions as a junior.			
MCPHADDEEN, Aubrey OL	6-6, 320	Jacksonville	First Coast
Rivals.com rated No. 7 offensive tackle and Dream Team Top 100 nationally ♦ Second-team All-Area as a junior.			
NORRIS, D.J. TE	6-3, 240	Pace	Pace
Ranked No. 18 tight end nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Northwest Florida Player of the Year ♦ Had 70 tackles and eight sacks as senior defensive end ♦ All-Area as a junior ♦ Had 12 receptions for 250 yards.			
OVERMYER, David OL	6-3, 270	Lilburn, GA	Parkview
Rivals.com rated No. 27 offensive tackle nationally ♦ Helped team to third consecutive state championship as a senior, setting Georgia team record with 45 straight wins.			
SHAW, Joslin ATH	5-11, 185	Plant City	Plant City
Ranked among Top 50 athletes nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Played running back and defensive back ♦ Third-team All-State ♦ As a senior, had 1,396 yards rushing.			
SIMS, III, Ernie LB	6-0, 220	Tallahassee	North Florida Christian
Parade All-American ♦ USA Today second-team All-American ♦ Rivals.com rated No. 1 inside linebacker nationally ♦ Helped team to four consecutive state championship games ♦ Had 180 career tackles, including 41 tackles for loss, 12 quarterback sacks and seven fumbles caused ♦ Had 600 career rushing yards and 17 touchdowns ♦ Had 1,081 yards rushing and 23 touchdowns on 115 carries as a senior ♦ Had 133 tackles, including 73 solo, 15 tackles for loss, six fumbles caused, seven fumbles recovered and one blocked field goal ♦ Played on varsity team as an eighth grader.			

A LOOK AT THE SEMINOLES

RESULTS

(9-5, 7-1)

38	at Iowa State	31
40	VIRGINIA	19
37	at Maryland	10
48	DUKE	17
20	at Louisville	(OT) 26
48	CLEMSON	31
27	at Miami (Fla.)	28
24	NOTRE DAME	34
34	at Wake Forest	21
21	at Georgia Tech	13
40	NORTH CAROLINA	14
7	at North Carolina State	17
31	Florida	14
SUGAR BOWL		
13	Georgia	26

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	ATT	COMP	YARDS	PCT	TD	INT
Rix	225	118	1684	52.4	13	7
McPherson	155	80	1017	51.6	12	1

RUSHING

NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD
Jones	161	938	5.8	64	8
Maddox	106	602	5.7	34	4
Rix	86	289	3.4	27	3
Washington	60	273	4.5	18	1

RECEIVING

NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD
Boldin	65	1011	15.6	51	13
Gardner	38	625	16.4	56	8
Maddox	23	197	8.6	29	1
Thorpe	17	377	22.2	72	4

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Tackles: Pope 131, Boulware 127, Carter 94.
Interceptions: Samuels 3, McFadden 3.
Sacks: McFadden 3, Samuels 3, Brown 2, Pope 2.
Tackles for Loss: A. Jackson 18.5, T. Johnson 13.5.

SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	at North Carolina
Sept. 6	MARYLAND
Sept. 13	GEORGIA TECH
Sept. 20	COLORADO
Sept. 27	at Duke
Oct. 11	MIAMI (Fla.)
Oct. 18	at Virginia
Oct. 25	WAKE FOREST
Nov. 1	at Notre Dame
Nov. 8	at Clemson
Nov. 15	NORTH CAROLINA STATE
Nov. 29	at Florida

deliver passionate pep-talks, organizing cookouts with coaches and generally being more aware of building team unity, the Seminoles' hope to develop a more-harmonious attitude.

Players say it's working.

"The chemistry issue is very important," said Rix, selected by coaches as the "Hinesman Award" winner, which goes to the most dominate player of spring practice. "We have all the talent. We have the depth. It's just the little things.

"It's been a tough past couple months for everybody. We need to hold each other accountable and fix the off-the-field things, so we can have fun and just play football."

Rix endured his own personal struggles. After losing his starting job at one point last season, missing the Sugar Bowl due to a suspension (the penalty for missing a final exam), dealing with his father's health and personal problems, and bearing the brunt of criticism from players and fans, he has re-emerged as the team's clear No. 1 quarterback.

"You've heard the saying, 'Whatever doesn't kill you, makes you stronger.' I think it's definitely done that," Rix said. "There's no way I was going to quit or give in. It has fueled my motivation."

What should fuel the Seminoles' motivation is the fact they've been removed from college football center stage. They are no longer the straw that stirs title debate.

Many of the Seminoles' former stars, including Brad Johnson, Corey Simon, Derrick Brooks and Corey Fuller, were asked to address the team in separate meetings last spring.

"They basically told us we need to shut up and play," said tailback Lorenzo Booker. "In fact, that should be the slogan for (2003 season): 'Just shut up and play.' That's what we've been doing and I'm definitely happy with the progress we made."

The Seminoles will need all that progress and more to compete for the ACC title this year. N.C. State or Maryland enter the season as the ACC's top dogs. Even with Rix returning to start his third season, 10 defensive starters back, a kicker and another solid recruiting class, this program has a lot to prove.

If nothing else, the early-season schedule looks right: Three home games in the first four weeks, as well as two road trips in the first half of the season against rebuilding North Carolina and always-rebuilding Duke.

OFFENSE

Aside from the continued development of quarterback Chris Rix, the focal point of



CHRIS RIX HAD HIS DIFFICULTIES OFF THE FIELD, BUT THREW FOR 1,684 YARDS AND 13 TOUCHDOWNS LAST SEASON.

PHOTO BY BRUCE SCHWARTZMAN

spring was rebuilding an offensive line that had three starters chosen in the NFL Draft.

Three projected replacements, tackles Alex Barron and Ray Willis and guard Bobby Meeks, were limited with injuries, but all three are expected to be at full strength in August. Behind them, depth improved with the development of players such as Matt Meinrod, Matt Heinz, Eric Broe and Ron Lunford.

Center David Castillo, forced into a starting role late last season when Antoine Mirambeau was injured, was credited as one of the most improved players during spring.

Receivers P.K. Sam and Craphonso Thorpe, both juniors, showed consistent route-running and ball-catching. Dominic Robinson has completed a year's transition from cornerback and worked into the main rotation.

Newcomers Chauncey Stovall and Chris Davis showed flashes of promise. Lorne Sam, P.K.'s younger brother, spent the spring playing quarterback, but it seems certain he will become a receiver again, possibly as a dual-purpose player.

"The receiver corps has come along better than we expected," Rix said. "Chris Davis will be one of my favorite targets. I think they all surprised the coaches and they've surprised many of the players as well on how far they have come in a short amount of time."

No such questions existed at running back. Even with Greg Jones recovering from knee surgery, and Lorenzo Booker missing

the final week of spring with an ankle sprain, the Seminoles still had ground production.

The biggest reason was Leon Washington, who rushed for 134 yards in this first start — last season's home finale against Florida. He will join Booker and Jones in a three-way system. It's expected the Seminoles will bring Jones along slowly, mindful of his power running style.

Still, the Seminoles' offensive success will depend on Rix. He must break bad habits by seeing the entire field better and staying in the pocket instead of running at the first sign of trouble.

"He's gotten a lot better at that," Bowden said. "And you would expect that. This is his third year. We're back on schedule now in a quarterback progression, except that Chris has 22 starts."

DEFENSE

Attitude starts up front. The Seminoles used a patchwork lineup in the spring, necessitated by injuries to the top four defensive tackles. Linebacker Kendyll Pope missed all of spring and linebacker Michael Boulware missed part of it.

Defensive coordinator Mickey Andrews, however, isn't one for making excuses.

"It's hard to correct physical and mental toughness and that's where we have to grow the most," Andrews said.

Statistically, the Seminoles' defense improved over the 2001 season in every category last season. With 10 of those players back, it would be easy to assume a resemblance to past defensive glory.

But there are several issues to confront. FSU lacks a proven pass-rusher. Kevin Emanuel hasn't provided it consistently,

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

QB Chris Rix

Emerging Star

LB A.J. Nicholson

Top Newcomer

RB Lorenzo Booker

but the Seminoles hope Eric Moore, Kameron Wimbley, Chauncey Davis and Willie Jones can. Also, Charles Howard moved from tackle to end to take advantage of his speed.

FSU signed four linebackers last year and those players, led by sophomore A.J. Nichol-

SEMINOLES SPRING ROSTER

No	NAME	Pos	CLASS	Ht	Wt	HOMETOWN	No	NAME	Pos	CLASS	Ht	Wt	HOMETOWN
28	Kasey Anderson	CB	Sr	5-11	175	Lakeland	72	Ron Lunford	OL	So	6-5	345	Jacksonville
40	Allen Augustin	LB	Sr	6-1	217	Miami	8	Bryant McFadden	CB	Jr	6-0	180	Hollywood
70	Alex Barron	OT	Jr	6-6	316	Orangeburg, SC	44	Sam McGrew	LB	So	6-3	230	Crawfordville
47	Xavier Beitia	PK	Jr	5-10	210	Tampa	73	Bobby Meeks	OG	Jr	6-3	295	Aldine, TX
28	Lorenzo Booker	RB	Fr	5-11	182	Ventura, CA	64	Matt Meinrod	OL	So	6-4	297	Tarpon Springs
58	Michael Boulware	LB	Sr	6-3	220	Columbia, SC	55	Eric Moore	DE	Jr	6-4	245	Pahokee
14	Anthony Bredwood	CB	Jr	5-10	185	Palm Bay	62	Cory Niblock	OL	Fr	6-4	300	St. Augustine
65	Eric Broe	OG	So	6-6	327	Norcross, GA	54	A.J. Nicholson	LB	So	6-2	230	Salem, NC
7	Rufus Brown	CB	Sr	5-9	185	El Paso, TX	27	Claudius Osei	RV	Jr	6-0	195	Tallahassee
52	Brodrick Bunkley	DL	So	6-3	285	Tampa	56	Ray Piquion	LB	Jr	6-0	215	Miami
92	Darrell Burston	DE	Fr	6-2	225	Fayetteville, GA	9	Kendyll Pope	LB	Sr	6-2	220	Ft. White
88	Donnie Carter	TE	So	6-4	260	Waycross, GA	12	Gordy Reid	RV	Sr	5-11	185	Larkspur, CO
23	Jerome Carter	RV	Jr	6-0	217	Lake City	26	Willie Reid	RB	So	5-10	190	Kathleen, GA
63	David Castillo	C	Jr	6-2	300	Palm Beach	16	Chris Rix	QB	Jr	6-4	205	Margarita, CA
39	Marcello Church	LB	So	6-1	221	St. Petersburg	21	Dominic Robinson	WR	Jr	6-1	200	Bar, CA
46	James Coleman	FB	So	6-0	253	Tallahassee	71	Brian Ross	NG	Jr	6-2	300	Raleigh, NC
51	Buster Davis	LB	Fr	5-11	242	Daytona Beach	11	Gerard Ross	CB	So	6-2	185	Jacksonville
94	Chauncey Davis	DE	Jr	6-2	260	Auburndale	80	Lorne Sam	QB/WR	Fr	6-2	200	Buford, GA
5	Chris Davis	WR	Fr	6-0	170	St. Petersburg	81	P.K. Sam	WR	Jr	6-3	195	Buford, GA
35	B.J. Dean	FB	So	5-11	256	Tuscaloosa, AL	10	Stanford Samuels	CB	Sr	5-10	190	Miami
45	Darnell Dockett	DT	Sr	6-4	280	Burtonsville, MD	89	Brian Sawyer	DS	Sr	6-2	240	Cordele, GA
90	Kevin Emanuel	DE	Sr	6-4	255	Waco, TX	36	P.J. Selvidio	FB	Sr	6-2	235	Palm Beach
37	Chase Goggins	PK	Fr	5-9	160	Douglas, GA	19	Wyatt Sexton	QB	Fr	6-3	192	Tallahassee
31	Chris Hall	P	So	5-10	212	Centerville, VA	32	Leroy Smith	CB	Jr	5-10	190	Quincy
41	Kyler Hall	FS	Jr	6-0	190	Live Oak	15	Chauncey Stovall	WR	Jr	6-2	215	Vero Beach
46	Nate Hardage	LB	Jr	6-1	249	Sylvester, GA		Edgar Ter-Oganessian	DT	Jr	6-2	240	Daly City, CA
57	Matt Heinz	OG	So	6-4	273	Tallahassee	1	Craphonso Thorpe	WR	Jr	6-2	175	Tallahassee
60	Andrew Henry-Kennon	C	So	6-4	308	Tallahassee	12	Fabian Walker	QB	Jr	6-2	216	Americus, GA
14	Matt Henshaw	TE	So	6-4	209	Brentwood, TN	24	B.J. Ward	FS	Jr	6-3	206	Dallas, TX
76	Myles Hodish	DS	So	6-0	225	Ft. Lauderdale	3	Leon Washington	RB	So	5-9	190	Jacksonville
59	Charles Howard	DE	Jr	6-3	258	Lake Butler	20	Torrance Washington	FB	So	6-1	245	Madison County
38	Paul Irons	TE	Jr	6-2	250	New Orleans, LA	22	Pat Watkins	FS	So	6-4	195	Tallahassee
99	Travis Johnson	NG	Jr	6-5	281	Oaks, CA	31	Roger Williams	RV	Fr	6-1	190	Rabbins, GA
6	Greg Jones	RB	Sr	6-1	248	Beaufort, SC	77	Ray Willis	OT	Jr	6-6	295	Angleton, TX
29	Willie Jones	DE	So	6-1	234	Miami	95	Kameron Wimbley	DE	So	6-4	230	Wichita, KS
86	Joey Kaleitini	WR	Sr	6-0	198	Niceville	91	Jeff Womble	NG	Sr	6-3	306	Durwoody, GA
	David Koral	QB	So	6-1	200	Palisades, CA							

2003 PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE	
QB	Chris Rix, Jr.*/Fabian Walker, Jr.
TB	Greg Jones, Sr.*/Leon Washington, So.
FB	B.J. Dean, So.*/Torrance Washington, So.
WR	Craphonso Thorpe, Jr./Dominic Robinson, Jr
WR	P.K. Sam, Jr./Chauncey Stovall, Jr.
TE	Matt Henshaw, So./Paul Irons, Jr.
RT	Ray Willis, Jr.*/Ron Lunford, So.
RG	Bobby Meeks, Jr./Eric Broe, So.
C	David Castillo, Jr./Andrew Henry-Kennon, So.
LG	Matt Meinrod, So./Matt Heinz, So.
LT	Alex Barron, Jr./Ron Lunford, So.
PK	Xavier Beitia, Jr.*/Chase Goggins, Fr.

DEFENSE	
DE	Kevin Emanuel, Sr.*/Kameron Wimbley, So.
DT	Darnell Dockett, Sr.*/Broderick Bunkley, So.
DT	Travis Johnson, Jr.*/Jeff Womble, Sr.
DE	Eric Moore, Jr./Charles Howard, Jr.
LB	Michael Boulware, Sr.*/Marcello Church, Jr.
LB	Allen Augustin, Sr.*/Sam McGrew, So.
LB	Kendyll Pope, Sr.*/A.J. Nicholson, So.
CB	Stanford Samuels, Sr.*/Leroy Smith, Jr.
CB	Rufus Brown, Sr.*/Bryant McFadden, Jr.
SS	Jerome Carter, Jr.*/Claudius Osei, Jr.
FS	Kyler Hall, Jr.*/B.J. Ward, Jr.
P	Chris Hall, So.

NOTEBOOK

At the first stop of his annual statewide booster club tour in April, Florida State coach Bobby Bowden received a cherished gift. Boxing megastar Roy Jones, Jr., who lives near Pensacola, surprised Bowden by presenting an autographed boxing glove. "Coach, I didn't go to Florida State, but I am a huge Bobby Bowden fan," Jones said as a sellout banquet crowd rose with ovation. It was all a bit symbolic for Bowden, who spent the offseason counter-punching against critics who claim he has lost a firm grip on his program. That perception was fueled by a series of off-field problems, headlined by a gambling probe of former quarterback Adrian McPherson. "It doesn't make me hate coaching," said Bowden, who is 73 years old as he enters his 28th season at FSU. "It doesn't make me want to quit. But it does make me want to solve it somehow."

Florida State is hoping a portion of its renovated Moore Athletic Center is completed in time for players to use in August. The highest priority is the training table cafeteria. Last season, players ate, lifted weights and met with coaches in different locations.

"We felt like it hurt our relationship with players," said Bowden. "After a practice, it really helps when you sit down at a meal table and pat 'em on the back a little bit, and let 'em know you're not really mad at 'em, that you still love them."

When the three-story Moore Center is completed in early 2004, the Seminoles will enjoy one of the nation's largest weight-training and medical-treatment facilities.

Much of the attention surrounding FSU's spring practice centered upon who wasn't participating. The Seminoles started the spring with all four defensive tackles on their two-deep depth chart unable to practice. That forced walk-ons to make up the first and second teams.

There was so much attrition that it forced the Seminoles to scale back their annual Garnet and Gold game. Instead of a real game, the ball was placed at predetermined spots on the field. There were no kick returns. At various points, the game was halted in favor of seven-on-seven passing drills.

—Bill Vilona

FLORIDA STATE

Booker Ready to Show His Stuff

A simple handoff would often create the most profound reaction. Lorenzo Booker would take the ball and leave another defender flailing. With each move, every burst of speed in the spring, Booker seemed to reinforce why he carried so much acclaim upon arrival at Florida State.

"My style has always been to make people miss," said Booker, a 5-11, 182-pound freshman. "I tell the linemen, 'Look, all I want you to do is get me past the line of scrimmage, and I'll do the rest.'"

He's made a believer out of FSU coach Bobby Bowden.

"He makes a three-yard run look like an All-American highlight," Bowden said. "He's a weapon. You give him room and he can go the distance."

The Seminoles are hoping to find enough space.

With Greg Jones making rapid recovery from knee surgery, and Leon Washington stepping forward last season as a freshman, Booker becomes both an intrigue and a problem.

How can the Seminoles get him on the field?

"We're going to have to find a way," said offensive coordinator Jeff Bowden. "I imagine that's what we'll be spending a lot of time this summer trying to figure out ... getting these talented running backs enough at-bats."

Booker made it easy last year by requesting a redshirt season so he could learn the system and become better acclimated after rushing for nearly 6,000 yards and scoring 99 touchdowns his final two seasons at St. Bonaventure High School in Ventura, Calif.

In 2002, the Seminoles had a crowded backfield, with Jones, Nick Maddox, Willie Reid and three freshmen — Booker, Washington and Thomas Clayton.

Maddox completed his eligibility. Reid switched to receiver. Clayton transferred to Michigan.

Booker was among the Seminoles top players in spring practice, until a high ankle sprain sustained during a scrimmage kept him from playing the final week. He did not play in the team's annual Garnet and Gold game.

When preseason camp begins, Jones will be eased back into contact after having reconstructive knee surgery in late November, so Washington and Booker will handle the bulk of practice repetitions. That will be his opportunity to push for a significant role.

"As far as being in the front or at the back of the depth chart ... if I end up being a starter, fine, but to tell you the truth, it's not going to feel like it," Booker said. "At Florida State, everybody is as good as everybody else." □



LORENZO BOOKER IS PART OF FSU'S THREE-MAN TAILBACK ROTATION.

PHOTO BY RICK JONES/THE OSCEOLA

son, were productive enough in the spring to ease depth concerns.

Andrews didn't like the lack of consistent desire by his defense this spring.

In the secondary, Pat Watkins and Kyler Hall are fierce hitters and cornerback Stanford Samuels is a team leader.

"If you are super defensively and average offensively, you're talking 11-1, 10-2," Bowden said. "If you're super offensively and average defensively, you're talking 7-4, 8-3. So if you're going to be super in any area, you would like it to be on defense."

The Seminoles will need someone to emerge as a ferocious pass rusher. Andrews likes to play his cornerbacks in one-on-one coverage, which requires help from both sides.

"There's no magic wand for hunger," he said. "You're supposed to recruit it. If they

T HE NUMBER ONE QUESTION AS SUMMER GIVES WAY TO A NEW SEASON IS SO DIFFERENT: CAN FLORIDA STATE GET IT BACK?

ain't hungry when you get 'em, you're not going to make 'em that way."

SPECIAL TEAMS

When Xavier Beitia missed a last-second kick in a 28-27 loss to Miami, the Seminoles had to be concerned about potential long-term effects. Maybe it's only coincidence, but

Beitia was not the same kicker after that miss, missing six of his last 12 field goal attempts after missing only once prior to the Miami game. Beitia, however, appeared to get back on track by kicking well during spring practice.

FSU planned for the future by signing Chase Goggins, one of the nation's top-rated high school kickers.

For the third time in three seasons, the 'Noles break in a new punter. Chris Hall has a strong leg, but didn't show it by struggling in practice against simulated punt blocks.

Lorenzo Booker and Chris Davis (provided he's full strength from knee surgery) will be the strongest candidates to return kickoffs. Safety B.J. Ward blocked four field goals last season, establishing a new school record.

— Bill Vilona





GEORGIA TECH

YELLOW JACKETS

The Chan Gailey era begins its second year in Atlanta with more questions than answers.

Can Gailey guide Georgia Tech to the top-tier of the ACC standings? How will he handle the play calling?

Who will be the quarterback?

ing duties. The overhaul led to the five coaches with new titles and/or responsibilities.

The freewheeling days of Friedgen were gone when Gailey implemented a scaled-down version of the offense in the spring.

how to execute the plays," senior quarterback A.J. Suggs said. "We kept it very simple, but still, it just goes to show that if you execute the play, then a lot of good things can happen."

Tech will use more two-back sets and less gadgetry, which might be just as well

Questions Abound in Gailey's Year 2

Gailey was hired in the offseason preceding the 2002 season when George O'Leary left for his ill-fated job at Notre Dame. Gailey brought a solid name and professional credentials to a program that had reached a bowl in each of the previous five seasons.

Things began well, with the Yellow Jackets winning three of their first four games behind the rushing of converted safety Tony Hollings.

But when Hollings blew out his knee in the final minutes of Tech's win against BYU, the season took a turn for the worse. Much worse.

Tech limped home, going 4-5 over the rest of the season, including a humiliating 51-7 loss to rival Georgia to end the regular season and an embarrassing 30-21 loss to depleted Fresno State in the Silicon Valley Football Classic.

Tech finished sixth in the ACC, and with North Carolina State, Virginia and Maryland on the rise, the Yellow Jackets' status as Florida State's main competition was short lived. With massive renovations at Bobby Dodd Stadium ongoing, Tech athletics director Dave Braine felt compelled to write a letter expressing sympathy with those upset over the poor season-ending performances.

Then came a staff shake-up, starting with offensive coordinator Bill O'Brien — one of the last coaching links to the O'Leary/Ralph Friedgen era — leaving to join Friedgen's staff at Maryland. It finished with Gailey deciding to take over play-call-

"We have more than enough (plays). We just don't have as much as they had," said passing game coordinator Buddy Geis, who worked with Gailey in Dallas and was hired in February. "That way we're going to get a lot more reps at what we want to get better at, in the long run with the new system. Repetition is how you get better at anything."

The players were pleased with the simpler terminology, saying it was easier to learn and involved less thinking. Tech made progress with the implementation during the spring, and Gailey said he put in just about everything he wanted to.

"We've definitely come a long way with learning the system and learning

considering the team's unsettled quarterback situation. Suggs, a transfer from Tennessee, held down the starting job for all 13 games last season, but was inconsistent throughout and was pulled from the bowl game for a poor decision right before halftime.

Backup Damarius Bilbo, used in limited run-first packages during the regular season, showed how inconsistent he was in the second half against Fresno State, tossing two touchdowns and four interceptions. Gailey stated a preference for mobile quarterbacks last season and the coaching staff gave Bilbo every opportunity to seize the starting job in spring practice, but the athletic sophomore never did. He matched each highlight-reel pass or run with a turnover or poor decision.

at a glance

2001: 7-6 overall; 4-4 ACC (6th)

COACH: Chan Gailey — At Georgia Tech: 7-6; 1 year; Overall: 31-17, 4 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 11; 5 offense, 6 defense

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Damarius Bilbo, LT Nat Dorsey, WR Jonathan Smith, LB Keyaron Fox, LB Daryl Smith, DB Reuben Houston

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: Tech returns five of its defensive front seven, including some of the team's best players — Keyaron Fox and Daryl Smith. Three quarters of the defensive line played together for the final seven games last season. The offensive line returns four starters, so there should be some continuity along both lines.

YELLOW JACKETS

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: Quarterback is still unsettled and Tech lost its two best tailbacks to academic problems in May. The wide receivers lack experience and consistency. The secondary breaks in three new starters, and the specialists are all new. This team looks like it's at least a year away.

OVERVIEW: Gailey has taken over the offensive play calling and will look to keep it conservative as Tech likely breaks in a new quarterback. The key will be finding a tailback and establishing a productive running game. The defense will stop people, but it is undersized and struggles against power running teams. The early schedule is tough with trips to BYU and Florida State and home games against Auburn and Clemson.

LINEBACKER DARYL SMITH HAD A TEAM-HIGH 99 TACKLES IN 2002.

PHOTO BY TOMASSO DEROSA

For more coverage of the Yellow Jackets, visit www.georgiatech.rivals.com

YELLOW JACKETS RECRUITING

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
ANOAI, Joe DE	6-3, 235	Pensacola, FL	Escambia
BorderWars.com rated No. 80 player in Florida ♦ Pensacola News Journal Defensive Player of the Year ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ As a senior, had 119 tackles, 10 quarterback sacks, five fumbles caused and two interceptions ♦ Had 96 tackles and six quarterback sacks as a junior.			
BALL, Reggie QB	6-0, 180	Stone Mountain	Stephenson
Ranked among Top 15 all-purpose quarterbacks nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Atlanta Journal-Constitution Super Southern 100 ♦ County Offensive Player of the Year ♦ Had more than 2,000 yards passing and 19 touchdowns with two interceptions as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 1,300 yards passing and 13 touchdowns ♦ Had 700 yards rushing and 13 touchdowns.			
CARTER, Patrick QB	6-3, 185	St. Petersburg, FL	Lakewood
Rivals.com rated No. 12 dual-threat quarterback nationally ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Ranked No. 46 player in Florida by Orlando Sentinel ♦ Florida Times-Union Florida Super 75 ♦ As a senior, had 2,304 yards passing and 21 touchdowns ♦ Had 300 yards rushing and four TDs ♦ Three-year letterman.			
DUNLAP, Chris WR	6-0, 185	Miramar, FL	Miramar
PrepStar honorable mention All-Region ♦ All-District ♦ Had 38 receptions for 715 yards and eight touchdowns as a senior ♦ Had 200 yards rushing and two touchdowns ♦ Had one interception and returned two fumbles for touchdowns.			
FLEURIDOR, Brian CB	5-11, 180	Delray Beach, FL	Boca Raton
Three-time All-Conference ♦ Second-team All-State as a junior ♦ Team captain ♦ As a senior, had 35 tackles and one interception returned for touchdown ♦ Had 56 tackles and seven interceptions as a junior ♦ Four-year letterman.			
GASTON, Joe S	6-0, 200	Marietta	Walton
PrepStar Dream Team ♦ Rivals.com ranked No. 2 all-purpose running back nationally ♦ Atlanta Journal-Constitution Super Southern 100 ♦ Rated No. 20 player in Florida by BorderWars.com ♦ Orlando Sentinel Florida Top 100 ♦ Florida Times-Union Florida Super 75 ♦ As a senior, had 1,003 yards rushing and 13 touchdowns in eight games ♦ Had 18 receptions for 330 yards ♦ Returned two punts for touchdowns ♦ Season ended with broken ankle after eight games.			
HALL, KaMichael LB	6-1, 205	Houston, TX	Klein Forest
Rated No. 67 linebacker nationally by Rivals.com ♦ District Most Valuable Defensive Player ♦ Team captain ♦ Had 160 tackles, including nine tackles for loss, and two interceptions as a senior ♦ Three-year letterman.			
MOORE, Nick LB	6-1, 225	Arlington, TX	Arlington
PrepStar honorable mention All-Region ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ All-Area Defensive Player of the Year ♦ As a senior, had 183 tackles, five interceptions, five fumbles caused, four fumbles recovered and four quarterback sacks ♦ Had 230 yards rushing and six touchdowns ♦ Had 142 tackles and four quarterback sacks as a junior ♦ Three-year letterman.			

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
NEWBERRY, LeShawn DT	6-0, 310	Port Orange, FL	Spruce Creek
PrepStar honorable mention All-Region ♦ BorderWars.com rated No. 60 player in Florida ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ Four-year starter ♦ Team captain ♦ Had 75 tackles, including 15 tackles for loss, six quarterback sacks, five fumbles caused and two fumbles recovered as a senior.			
OLIVER, Adam DE	6-4, 250	New Port Richey, FL	Ridgewood
Orlando Sentinel Florida Top 100 ♦ All-State ♦ County Defensive Player of the Year ♦ As a senior, set school record with 151 tackles ♦ Had 6.5 quarterback sacks, six fumbles caused and five punts blocked ♦ Had 1,154 yards rushing and 15 touchdowns ♦ Had nine sacks as a junior ♦ Four-year letterman.			
PARKER, Eddy OL	6-5, 280	Burnet, TX	Burnet
All-State ♦ Helped team to state championship game ♦ Had 112 pancake blocks and 52 knockdown blocks as a senior ♦ Three-year letterman.			
PUPELLO, Kyle FB/LB	6-1, 230	Tampa, FL	Plant
As a senior, led team with 125 tackles and six fumbles caused ♦ Team Most Valuable Player as a junior ♦ Had over 100 tackles and 50 receptions in both sophomore and junior seasons ♦ Four-year letterman.			
RHODES, Matt OL	6-4, 275	Angleton, TX	Angleton
PrepStar honorable mention All-Region ♦ Three-time All-County ♦ Team captain ♦ Three-year letterman.			
ROBERSON, Avery S	6-2, 190	Atlanta	Washington
USA Today second-team All-American ♦ PrepStar Dream Team ♦ Rated No. 37 player and No. 5 quarterback nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Atlanta Journal-Constitution Super Southern 100 ♦ Ranked No. 11 player in Florida by Orlando Sentinel ♦ Florida Times-Union Florida Super 75 ♦ Had over 1,000 yards rushing as a senior.			
SCOTT, Kenny CB	6-1, 175	Daytona Beach, FL	Seabreeze
PrepStar honorable mention All-Region ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ Team captain ♦ As a senior, had 106 tackles, including 34 tackles for loss, and five fumbles caused ♦ Helped team to state championship as a sophomore ♦ Four-year letterman.			
TUMINELLO, Kevin OL	6-4, 285	Youngstown, OH	Boardman
PrepStar honorable mention All-Region ♦ All-Northeastern Ohio ♦ All-Conference ♦ Team captain ♦ Three-year letterman.			
WHEELER, Philip LB	6-2, 215	Columbus	Shaw
PrepStar honorable mention All-Region ♦ All-State ♦ Team captain ♦ As a senior, had 106 tackles, including 34 tackles for loss, and five fumbles caused ♦ Helped team to state championship as a sophomore ♦ Four-year letterman.			
WILLIAMS, Sam CB	5-11, 170	Atlanta	Mays
Atlanta Journal-Constitution All-City ♦ Team captain ♦ Had 65 tackles, six interceptions and 15 passes broken up as a senior ♦ Had 24 receptions for 703 yards.			
WROTTO, Mansfield DT	6-4, 310	Snellville	Brookwood
Rivals.com rated No. 42 player in Georgia ♦ Atlanta Journal-Constitution Top 50 in Georgia ♦ All-State ♦ As a senior, had 61 tackles, including five tackles for loss, and 2.5 quarterback sacks ♦ Graded 92 percent on blocking assignments with 46 knockdown blocks as offensive lineman ♦ Three-year letterman.			

A LOOK AT THE YELLOW JACKETS

RESULTS

(7-6, 4-4)

45	VANDERBILT	3
31	at Connecticut	14
19	at Clemson	24
28	BRIGHAM YOUNG	19
21	at North Carolina	13
21	WAKE FOREST	24
10	at Maryland	34
23	VIRGINIA	15
24	at North Carolina State	17
13	FLORIDA STATE	21
17	DUKE	2
7	at Georgia	51
SILICON VALLEY CLASSIC		
21	Fresno State	30

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING						
NAME	ATT	COMP	YARDS	PCT	TD	INT
Suggs	363	208	2242	57.3	12	15
Bilbo	67	29	487	43.3	3	5
RUSHING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
Hollings	92	633	6.9	72	11	
Clinkscale	75	468	6.2	51	3	
Eziernefe	70	282	4.0	24	2	
Daniels	72	255	3.5	25	2	
RECEIVING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
Watkins	71	1050	14.8	69	5	
Glover	47	434	9.2	27	3	
Smith	36	430	11.9	42	3	
Thomas	20	222	11.1	42	1	
DEFENSIVE LEADERS						
Tackles: Smith 99, Wimbush 94, Fox 92, Muires 76.						
Interceptions: Muires 5.						
Sacks: Wimbush 6, Henderson 5, Smith 5.						
Tackles for Loss: Henderson 15, Smith 15.						

SCHEDULE

Aug. 28	at Brigham Young (Thur.)
Sept. 6	AUBURN
Sept. 13	at Florida State
Sept. 20	CLEMSON
Sept. 27	at Vanderbilt
Oct. 4	NORTH CAROLINA STATE
Oct. 11	at Wake Forest
Oct. 23	MARYLAND (Thur.)
Nov. 8	at Duke
Nov. 15	NORTH CAROLINA
Nov. 22	at Virginia
Nov. 29	GEORGIA

Bilbo struggled last season in grasping the offense, so it would stand that he would be one of the biggest beneficiaries of the change in offensive coordinators.

"I need to learn and make decisions quicker. I know where I'm going with the reads, but I've got to do it quicker," Bilbo said.

Bilbo and Suggs will compete with true freshmen Patrick Carter and Reggie Ball in the fall for the starting job, though Gailey almost certainly will go with Bilbo or Suggs.

The Yellow Jackets added a whole new set of questions following spring football, losing 10 players, including Hollings and defensive end Tony Hargrove, when the university declared them academically ineligible for the 2003 season and dismissed them from school until next spring because they failed to meet the school's grade requirements.

OFFENSE

Whoever winds up under center will have four offensive linemen returning, including junior left tackle Nat Dorsey, a two-time All-ACC selection. Dorsey and left guard Leon Robinson missed spring practice, hampering the team's offensive production, but both are expected to be in the starting lineup for the opener.

The right side of the line — center Hugh Reilly, guard Brad Honeycutt and tackle Kyle Wallace — got in a full spring

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

LB Keyaron Fox

Emerging Star

DE Eric Henderson

Top Newcomer

DB Kenny Scott

of workouts and gained experience playing with one another.

The offensive line and the quarterbacks will have to carry the offense while the Yellow Jackets look for a new tailback. With Tony Hollings out for spring practice, sophomore Michael Sampson got most of the work with the first team and gained a lot of confidence. However, Sampson was one of the 10 players ruled academically ineligible, and Tech must start over in its search for a capable tailback. The most likely candidates will be sophomores

Ajenavi "Ace" Eziemefe and P.J. Daniels.

Injuries dampened the outlook at fullback, with projected starter Jimmy Dixon breaking his leg during contact drills early in the spring. Jonathan Jackson missed all of the spring with a broken ankle suffered late last season. The injuries opened a spot for defensive end Michael Matthews, a high school tight end. Matthews showed promise, particularly with pass receiving, and could be the starter.

Tech has plenty of options at wide receiver, but after losing seniors Kerry Watkins and Will Glover, the Yellow Jackets are short on proven talent. Senior Jonathan Smith will be the featured pass catcher, but Tech needs someone to emerge as a reliable second option. Sophomore Lekeldrick Bridges, the fastest receiver, and junior Levon Thomas each had their moments in the spring, but neither one showed enough consistency to be counted on.

"If you don't catch the ball consistently, you can't be a big-play receiver," Gailey said after a spring game that included way too many dropped passes.

Juniors Nate Curry and Mark Logan and sophomore Xavier McGuire will all get looks in the fall.

DEFENSE

The staff turnover had a trickle-down effect on the defense, with assistant coach Curtis Modkins moving from defensive backs to running backs and defensive coordinator Jon Tenuta taking over the secondary.

The defense now has just three coaches — Tenuta, defensive line coach Glenn Spencer and linebackers coach Brick Haley — compared with six on the offensive side of the ball.

Then again, the defense needs less work this season. Tenuta, who came to Tech from North Carolina before last season, implemented his system last year and has enough holdovers to keep it running smoothly. He's undaunted by the pressure of playing with an unsettled offense.

"I just know the defense has to stop people and if that's pressure, that's pressure," Tenuta said.

The loss of Tony Hargrove added even more pressure for Tenuta, but at least Tech returns three other starters from the defensive line in end Eric Henderson and tackles Travis Parker and Alfred Malone. Henderson, an emerging star at the end, is capable of putting much-needed pressure on opposing quarterbacks.

Senior end Greg Gathers, the school's all-time sack leader, missed most of last season with a kidney ailment and is



BACKUP QB DAMARIUS BILBO HAS SHOWN FLASHES OF BRILLIANCE, BUT HAS BEEN ERRATIC AT TIMES.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

expected back in the fall. If he can go, he'll be another valuable piece for Tenuta on the line, especially as a potential replacement for Hargrove.

"If he can come back and participate — and even if he's at 90 percent — he's a hell of a football player," Tenuta said.

Parker, an undersized but active tackle, and Malone, a 300-pound two-year starter, give the Yellow Jackets a veteran presence inside. With three-quarters of the line having played together for the last seven games of 2002, Tech's stunts looked more seamless during spring practice.

The Yellow Jackets are even better at linebacker with seniors Keyaron Fox and Daryl Smith anchoring the group. Fox, the team's most versatile defender, can play inside and outside and dropped down to defensive end in passing situations last year. He will play the weakside this year.

Smith, who missed spring practice after undergoing shoulder surgery in the offseason, will be back in the middle. They'll be joined by Gerris Wilkerson, who earned a job in the spring.

Tech's front seven will have to be strong because the secondary is young. Cornerback Jonathan Cox started every game last season

YELLOW JACKETS SPRING ROSTER

No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN	No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN
57	Tabugbo Anyansi	LB	Jr	6-1	220	Austell	36	Eddie Ivery	CB	Fr	5-10	165	Tampa, FL
76	Salih Besirevic	G	So	6-7	285	Denver, CO	63	Ben Jackson	G	So	6-1	270	Stockbridge
8	Damarius Bilbo	QB	So	6-3	225	Mass Point, MS	32	Jonathan Jackson	FB	Jr	6-2	225	Jacksonville, FL
99	Omar Billy	DT	So	6-2	270	Orlando, FL	46	Brian Johnson	FB	So	6-3	250	Evans
86	Gavin Bourgeois	FB	Jr	6-2	230	Peachtree City	33	David Jordan	PK	Fr	6-4	195	Columbus
50	Brad Brezina	DT	Fr	6-2	275	Greensboro	64	Travis Kelly	G	Fr	6-0	255	Warner Robins
85	Lekeldrick Bridges	WR	So	6-0	170	Dallas, TX	71	Reggie Koon	T	Sr	6-4	310	Miami, FL
43	Ather Brown	LB	Sr	6-3	230	Macon	20	Dawan Landry	SS	So	6-2	215	Amo, LA
9	Robbie Brown	QB	Jr	6-2	180	Blairsville	52	Anthony Lawston	LB	Sr	6-3	230	Baltimore, MD
40	Dan Burnett	PK	Sr	6-2	250	Liburn	97	LeRon Lee	DE	So	6-2	277	Ft. Pierce, FL
15	Nathan Burton	FS	Jr	6-2	200	Liburn	12	Mark Logan	WR	Jr	5-11	200	Greenwood, SC
22	James Butler	FS	Jr	6-3	210	Bainbridge	92	Alfred Malone	DT	Jr	6-4	300	Frisco City, AL
10	Brian Camp	QB	Sr	6-1	225	Dublin, OH	48	Michael Matthews	FB	Fr	6-4	275	Cincinnati, OH
39	Jerry Coffee	TE	Fr	5-11	180	Milledgeville	81	Xavier McGuire	WR	Fr	6-3	215	Dallas, TX
80	George Cooper	TE	Fr	6-5	252	Westerville, OH	73	Zeb McHargue	G	Fr	6-4	285	Gray
23	Jonathan Cox	CB	Sr	5-10	185	Chicago, IL	16	Kingi McNair	LB	Fr	6-1	210	Palahatchie, MS
5	Nate Curry	WR	Jr	5-10	195	Miami, FL	94	Travis Parker	DT	So	6-5	265	Hacienda Hts., CA
45	P.J. Daniels	RB	So	5-10	205	Houston, TX	75	Jeremy Phillips	T	Jr	6-7	285	Watkinsville
25	Dennis Davis	CB	Jr	6-0	185	Alto, NJ	93	Terron Pullen	DE	Fr	6-2	270	Wrightsville
47	Jimmy Dixon	FB	Jr	6-1	220	Arlington, TX	87	Joseph Rearden	TE	Jr	6-0	235	Warner Robins
70	Nat Dorsey	T	Jr	6-6	335	New Orleans, LA	67	Hugh Reilly	C	Sr	6-4	285	Roswell
68	Andrew Economos	SN	Jr	6-1	215	Atlanta	18	Chris Reis	SS	So	6-0	210	Roswell
28	Ajenavi Ezimefe	RB	So	6-1	225	New Orleans, LA	74	Leon Robinson	G	Jr	6-4	320	Garden City
78	Garren Findlay	T	Sr	6-5	290	North Logan, UT	34	Jack Rogers	SS	Sr	6-1	207	Gainesville
59	Jay Forester	LB	Fr	5-10	200	Fort Lauderdale, FL	23	Robbie Rollins	WR	So	6-1	195	Lyons
89	John Paul Foschi	TE	Sr	6-4	270	Glen Head, NY	38	Michael Sampson	RB	So	6-1	198	Lewisville, TX
54	Keyaron Fox	LB	Sr	6-3	220	Atlanta	16	Charlie Saunders	WR	Jr	5-9	160	Alpharetta
55	Greg Gathers	DE	Sr	6-1	270	LaPlace, LA	86	Christian Schroeder	PK	Jr	6-2	245	Rome
27	Venice Gilliam	CB	So	5-10	195	Tallahassee, FL	21	Daryl Smith	LB	Sr	6-2	235	Albany
31	Sterling Green	LB	Jr	6-2	210	Hyattsville, MD	51	Jonathan Smith	WR	Sr	5-10	189	Argyle
45	Eric Griswold	P	Fr	6-1	195	Marietta	17	A.J. Suggs	QB	Sr	6-4	215	Powder Springs
69	Will Hardy	T	Sr	6-4	295	Coryers	84	Gavin Tarquinio	TE	So	6-3	270	Marietta
44	Tony Hargrove	DE	Jr	6-4	266	Punta Gorda, FL	7	Levon Thomas	WR	Jr	6-0	195	College Park
11	Perfection Harris	CB	Fr	5-9	170	Staten Island, NY	1	Andy Thomson	P	Jr	5-11	180	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
62	Clay Hartley	G/C	Sr	6-4	280	Bryceville, FL	65	Andy Tidwell-Neal	C/G	Jr	6-4	295	Plymouth, MN
6	Jermaine Hatch	RB	Sr	6-2	205	Baton Rouge, LA	97	Cory Wallace	TE	Fr	6-2	225	Lawrenceville
56	Eric Henderson	DE	So	6-3	265	New Orleans, LA	77	Kyle Wallace	T	Jr	6-6	285	Lawrenceville
13	Hal Higgins	P/H	Sr	5-10	195	Cornelia	49	Gerris Wilkinson	LB	So	6-3	230	Oakland, CA
24	Tony Hollings	RB	Sr	5-11	215	Jeffersonville	91	Chirod Williams	DE	Jr	6-4	235	Jacksonville, FL
72	Brad Honeycutt	G	So	6-4	295	Mesquite, TX	83	Darius Williams	DE	Jr	6-6	265	Clarkston
9	Reuben Houston	CB	So	6-0	195	Peachtree City							

2003 PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB	Damarius Bilbo, So. OR A.J. Suggs, Sr.
RB	P.J. Daniels, So. OR Ajenavi Ezimefe, So.
FB	Michael Matthews, Fr./Jimmy Dixon, Jr.
WR	Jonathan Smith, Sr./Xavier McGuire, Fr.
WR	Nate Curry, Jr./Levon Thomas, Jr.
TE	John Paul Foschi, Sr./Darius Williams Jr.
LT	Nat Dorsey, Jr./Will Hardy, Sr.
LG	Leon Robinson, Jr.*/Andy Tidwell-Neal, Jr.
C	Hugh Reilly, Sr.*/Clay Hartley, Sr.
RG	Brad Honeycutt, So./Zeb McHargue, Fr.
RT	Kyle Wallace, Jr.*/Garren Findlay, Sr.
PK	Dan Burnett, Sr./David Jordan, Fr.

DEFENSE

DE	Eric Henderson, So.*/Chirod Williams, Jr.
DT	Travis Parker, So.*/Omar Billy, So.
DT	Alfred Malone, Jr.*/Brad Brezina, Fr.
DE	Greg Gathers, Sr./Darius Williams, Jr.
OLB	Keyaron Fox, Sr.*/Ather Brown, Sr.
MLB	Daryl Smith, Sr.*/Ather Brown, Sr.
OLB	Gerris Wilkinson, So.*/Tabugbo Anyansi, Jr.
DB	Jonathan Cox, Sr.*/Kenny Scott, Fr.
DB	Reuben Houston, So./Dennis Davis, Jr.
FS	James Butler, Jr./Nathan Burton, Jr.
SS	Dawan Landry, So./Chris Reis, So.
P	Andy Thomson, Jr./Hal Higgins, Sr.

NOTEBOOK

Georgia Tech passing game coordinator Buddy Geis estimates the Yellow Jackets would have won at least two more games if running back Tony Hollings had stayed healthy last year, giving Tech a 9-5 season instead of a 7-6 record.

Now Tech will have to face an entire season without Hollings, one of 10 Tech players ruled academically ineligible in May.

"I'm disappointed for these young men," Georgia Tech coach Chan Gailey said. "I hope that they will work toward continuing their education, and we will do everything we can to help them. This is a challenging school with high academic standards that will not be compromised."

Hollings' 2002 season ended in the fourth game last season because of a knee injury. At the time of his injury, he had rushed for 633 yards and led the nation in rushing. He had surgery on the knee and was expected back for fall practice.

The Yellow Jackets also lost running back Michael Sampson, who took advantage of Hollings' absence in the spring and emerged from spring practice as Tech's No. 1 tailback.

In addition to Hollings and Sampson, Tech lost starting defensive end Tony Hargrove and second-team linebackers Anthony Lawston and Kingi McNair, as well as five other players who had not been identified.

• With Hollings and Sampson out for the 2003 season, Tech will turn to sophomores P.J. Daniels and Ajenavi "Ace" Ezimefe and junior Jermiane Hatch. Daniels emerged as the top candidate for a while, but Sampson overcame him in the end. Ezimefe, who got the first crack at replacing Hollings last season, was slowed with an ankle injury.

Hatch is still trying to regain the form he displayed in 2000 before suffering a serious knee injury.

• Gailey stressed improving the team's mental and physical toughness in the off-season, and it's not clear how well the Yellow Jackets did in those areas. The offensive line committed nine false starts in the spring game.

"It's something we get angry about. It's a lack of discipline," Gailey said. "We can't have that."

—Brian Murphy

GEORGIA TECH

No Kidding: Time and Place for Everything



KEYARON FOX ANCHORS A STRONG YELLOW JACKET LINEBACKER CORPS.

PHOTO BY TOMASSO DEROSA

Keyaron Fox loves to laugh. He loves to smile and joke and kid. But when the Georgia Tech senior outside linebacker is on the field, he's all business.

And all kidding aside, he's one of the best players — regardless of position — on the Tech roster.

"You look at Fox and (middle linebacker Daryl) Smith and they're our two best defensive football players period," said defensive coordinator Jon Tenuta, who is usually reserved with his praise of players.

Fox has earned it. Last season, he made 92 tackles, including 13 for loss, despite missing time with a sprained ankle. In the Silicon Valley Football Classic against Fresno State, Fox recorded 16 tackles and a forced fumble.

Fox's strong play and his versatility — he played as a down lineman in passing situations — wasn't enough to garner All-ACC honors.

"I didn't do what I wanted to last season," Fox said. "I've just got to keep working, keep getting better."

He's well on his way. In the spring, he was Tech's best defensive player, dropping into pass coverage and manning the inside linebacker position when needed.

It's just another step in Fox's

growth. He came to Tech as a solid, if not spectacular, prospect out of Atlanta and played in eight games as a freshman in 2000, recording 34 tackles and one pass break-up. He broke out in 2001, starting 10 games and making 95 tackles. He also broke up four passes and forced a fumble.

He took his game to a new level last season. In addition to the 92 tackles, he recorded six pass break-ups, one interception, one fumble forced and one recovered.

Tech head coach Chan Gailey expressed shock when voters left Fox off the All-ACC teams, but Fox says he is more interested in team goals.

"We already know the defense is really going to have to buckle down this year and hold opponents to the least points possible, just to give the offense time to get in sync," he said. "One of our goals is to drop down the number of points the offenses are scoring."

Fox will play a large role in that. Tenuta has talked of moving Fox from strongside linebacker to the weakside to make room for Gerris Wilkerson in the starting lineup. Fox will also be asked to line up at end again this season.

That kind of versatility is serious stuff. □

and provides a solid, if not spectacular, base to the defensive backfield.

Reuben Houston will man the other corner, moving from the nickel position he played last year. Houston has a chance to be special, but he's still learning.

Dennis Davis has the inside track to claim the nickel back job, but talented freshman Kenny Scott is expected to push for playing time when he arrives in the fall.

The Yellow Jackets have two new starters at safety, a position where Tenuta prizes physical players. Tenuta is looking to strong safety Dawan Landry, a converted quarterback, to be the physical presence in the secondary, while free safety James Butler will work more in coverage.

"We're still learning out there," Houston said. "The fact that we're so tight, we're going to overcome those adversities. We always keep each other up. We know we've got to get things right."



THE EARLY SCHEDULE IS TOUGH WITH TRIPS

TO BYU AND FLORIDA STATE AND HOME GAMES AGAINST AUBURN AND CLEMSON.

SPECIAL TEAMS

The turnover doesn't stop on the field. Special teams coach Tommy Raye resigned in the offseason and was replaced by David Wilson.

For the past four years, Georgia Tech was able to count on getting seven points each time they scored a touchdown because Luke Manget never missed a PAT.

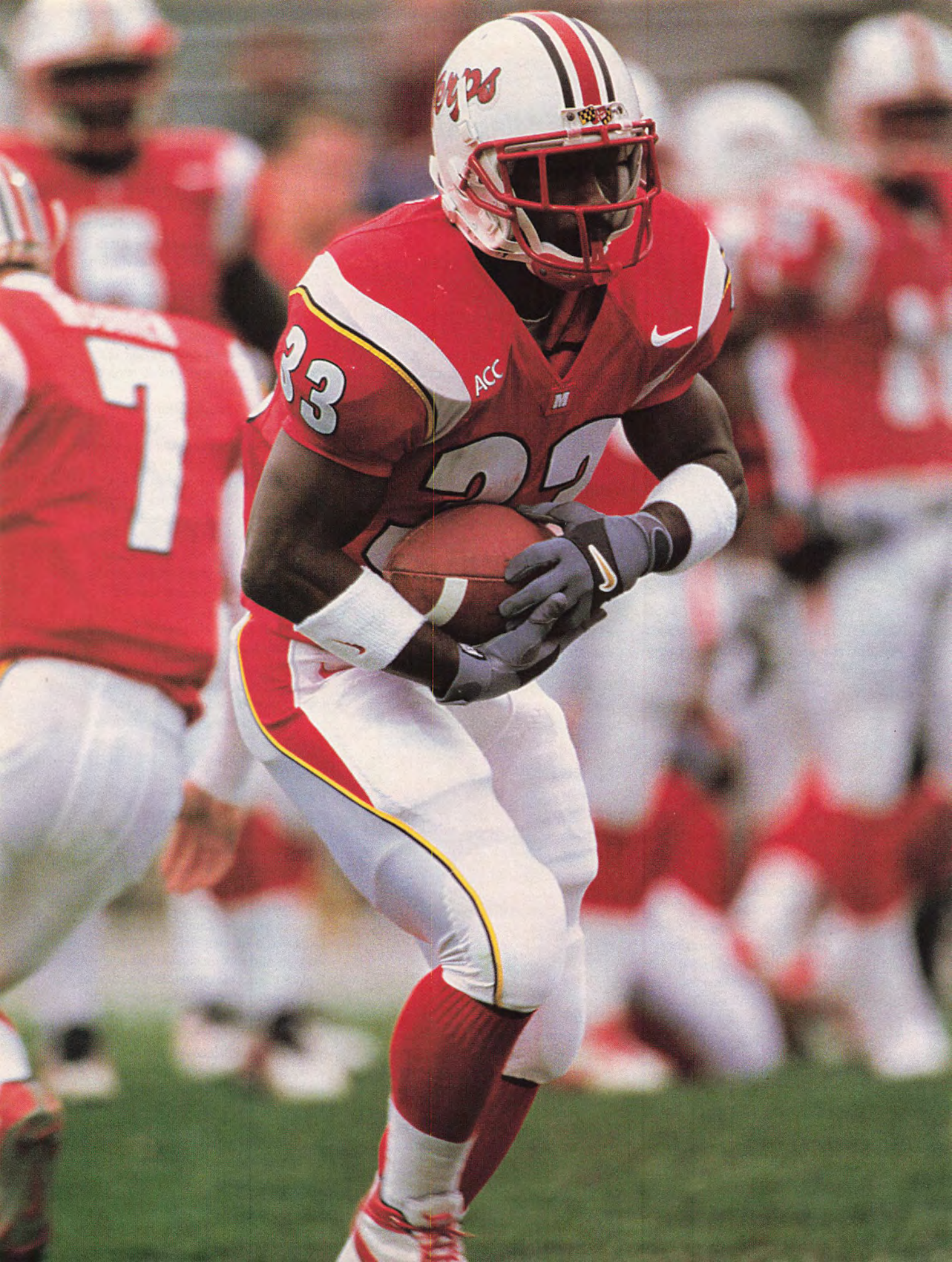
Now Manget is gone and senior Dan

Burnett, who has made eight of eight extra point attempts, but missed all eight of his field goal tries, will get his shot. Strong-legged freshman David Jordan will handle the kickoffs, but hasn't been consistent enough to challenge Burnett.

Tech lost both halves of its punting tandem last season — Chris Morehouse and Dan Dyke. Sixth-year senior Hal Higgins and walk-on Andy Thompson are competing to replace them. Pole vaulter David Smith has been punting in practice, but never participated in a full workout because of track season.

Tech's uncertainties extend into the return game, since Kerry Watkins and punt returner Kelley Rhino have graduated. Jonathan Smith and Reuben Houston took the majority of returns during the spring. Each is speedy and elusive, but whether they can be a game-breaker remains to be seen.

— Brian Murphy





MARYLAND TERRAPINS

Flush with confidence following an impressive victory in the 2002 Peach Bowl, several Maryland players uttered words not heard around College Park in half a century.

"There's no reason why we can't go to the national championship and win the

shoot for the highest honor we can achieve," senior cornerback Curome Cox said. "If our No. 1 goal is to win the ACC, then we limit ourselves. Why not focus on bigger and better things?"

Predictably, Friedgen wasn't going quite so bonkers, instead saying the pro-

Florida State in 2001 and 2002. In losses to those three perennial powers, the Terrapins were outscored 167-64.

"Wins like we had in the Peach Bowl help our credibility, which I hope leads to greater national respect, better recruiting and improved fundraising," Friedgen said.

Great Expectations Replace High Hopes

game," wide receiver Latrez Harrison declared after Maryland's stunning 30-3 rout of Tennessee. "It's time to raise the stakes around here. We just went up against a traditional powerhouse and whipped them, so that should let everyone know that we're for real."

The Terrapins had many reasons to be cocky that night in Atlanta.

- A team that secured only the second 11-win season in program history would be returning 56 lettermen, including 17 starters.

- Coach Ralph Friedgen had retained outstanding coordinators Charlie Taaffe and Gary Blackney despite head-coaching interest from other schools.

- And the staff was close to finalizing a recruiting class that most analysts would rank in the Top 25 nationally.

"I think the sky's the limit," punt returner/wide receiver Steve Suter said. "I don't see us losing a game, to tell you the truth. I hope we can make the big game. I want a national championship, and I think we've got a good shot."

Never mind that Maryland defeated an injury-riddled Tennessee team that endured its worst season (8-5, unranked) since 1988. Forget that Maryland has yet to beat a ranked non-conference opponent during the Friedgen era and has still never beaten Florida State. Confidence abounds in College Park, and the players broke the huddle following every practice by chanting "national championship" in unison.

"It's a mentality thing. We want to

gram is getting closer to the top, but still does not match up with annual Bowl Championship Series contenders such as Miami or Ohio State.

Friedgen noted that Maryland used walk-ons (Justin Duffie and Tosin Abari) at the injury-depleted defensive tackle position during the Peach Bowl.

"I like the way the players think, but we're not there yet. We don't have the talent or depth across the board to do that yet," said Friedgen, specifically speaking of Maryland's low numbers along both lines. "This team has the most potential of any since I've been here, but we are still very fragile injury-wise."

Friedgen also noted that the Tennessee win — while a landmark for the program — didn't entirely wipe out lopsided losses to Florida, Notre Dame and

"There's still a lot to do around here.

"We're in the process of building first-class facilities, then we might start getting first-class recruits, and that's when I'll start talking about winning national championships."

Maryland certainly has all the ingredients necessary to win the Atlantic Coast Conference championship for the second time in three years. Quarterback Scott McBrien leads an offense that features playmakers at all the skill positions. Pro prospects such as tackle Randy Starks and safety Madiou Williams anchor a defense that needs to replace only two starters.

What's more, an unbeaten run through the ACC could put Maryland in the national championship picture, since

at a glance

TERRAPINS

2002: 11-3 overall; 6-2 ACC (T-2nd)

COACH: Ralph Friedgen — At Maryland and overall: 21-5, 3 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 17; 7 offense, 9 defense, kicker

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Scott McBrien, RB Bruce Perry, OG Lamar Bryant, WR-PR Steve Suter, DT Randy Starks, LB Leon Joe, CB Domonique Foxworth, PK Nick Novak

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: The Terps have a lot of pluses — the offense is getting nothing but better with veteran McBrien at QB and an experienced secondary returns to keep opposing big plays to a minimum.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: The defensive line is thin (with only two true defensive ends on the roster), and there could be a huge drop-off at middle linebacker if senior Leon Joe or highly touted freshman Wesley Jefferson aren't capable of filling the shoes of Butkus Award winner E.J. Henderson.

OVERVIEW: All the parts are in place for a third consecutive season with 10 or more victories. If McBrien and tailback Bruce Perry remain healthy, the offense should put up plenty of points. If a few holes can be filled, the defense should remain stout. This could be the strongest, deepest team of the Friedgen era.

TAILBACK JOSH ALLEN WAS ONE OF ONLY A HANDFUL OF TRUE FRESHMEN TO PLAY FOR THE TERPS IN 2002.

PHOTO BY TOMASSO DEROSA

For more coverage of the Terrapins, visit www.maryland.rivals.com

TERRAPINS RECRUITING

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
ARMSTRONG, Robert DT 6-4, 300 Arlington, VA Fork Union Military Acad. Had 55 tackles, seven quarterback sacks, one interception and two fumbles recovered at Fork Union ♦ Prep All-District on offense and defense ♦ SuperPrep rated No. 31 player in Virginia.			
BALL, Lance TB 5-9, 220 Teaneck, NJ Teaneck All-State ♦ Had 3,403 career yards rushing and 39 touchdowns on 457 carries ♦ As a senior, had 1,473 yards rushing and 18 touchdowns ♦ Had 10 receptions for 180 yards ♦ Had 1,591 yards rushing and 20 touchdowns as a junior ♦ Three-year letterman ♦ Runs 4.4 in the 40-yard dash.			
BOLSTON, Conrad DT 6-4, 267 Burtonsville St. John's College HS SuperPrep All-American ♦ Washington Post second-team All-Met as a junior ♦ Washington, DC Pigskin Club All-Area ♦ Two-year starter ♦ Had 55 tackles, 14 quarterback sacks and two fumbles caused as a junior.			
CESA, Tim LB 6-2, 235 Kennesaw, GA Harrison PrepStar All-Southeast Region ♦ SuperPrep All-Region ♦ Starter on offense and defense ♦ As a senior, had 145 tackles, including 82 solo, eight tackles for loss and six quarterback sacks ♦ Had 21 receptions for 236 yards and two touchdowns ♦ Four-year letterman ♦ Member of track team.			
CHOATE, Brock OT 6-6, 275 Montoursville, PA Loyalsock Township SuperPrep All-Region ♦ All-State ♦ Two-time All-League ♦ Four-year varsity starter ♦ Did not allow a quarterback sack during high school career.			
CUG, Garrick OG 6-4, 295 Port Orange, FL Spruce Creek Ranked No. 53 offensive guard nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ All-District despite team not winning a game in 2002 ♦ Played defensive tackle in goal line situations, making 27 tackles ♦ Four-year letterman.			
CRUMMEY, Andrew C/G 6-5, 274 Van Wert, OH Van Wert Rivals.com rated No. 34 offensive guard nationally ♦ All-State ♦ League Offensive Lineman of the Year ♦ Three-year starter ♦ Member of wrestling and track teams.			
DAVIS, Vernon WR 6-4, 225 Washington, DC Dunbar USA Today second-team All-American ♦ Ranked No. 4 tight end nationally by Rivals.com ♦ SuperPrep All-Region ♦ Gatorade District of Columbia Player of the Year ♦ Three-year starter ♦ Played tight end, safety, wide receiver, kick returner, linebacker and defensive end ♦ As a senior, had 21 receptions for 511 yards and five touchdowns, despite missing three games with bone bruise ♦ Caught three two-point conversions and returned four kicks for touchdowns ♦ Had 35 receptions for 385 yards and 11 touchdowns as a junior ♦ State champion in high jump.			
GRONKOWSKI, Dan ATH 6-5, 235 Amherst, NY Williamsport North Three-year starter ♦ Completed passes for 1,407 yards and 16 touchdowns as a senior ♦ As a sophomore, had 539 yards receiving ♦ Four-year letterman in football and baseball ♦ Three-year letterman in basketball and lettered in hockey.			
JEFFERSON, Wesley LB 6-2, 231 Clinton, MD Gwynn Park Senior Parade All-American ♦ USA Today All-American ♦ SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 1 linebacker nationally ♦ Ranked No. 2 player in Atlantic East Region by Rivals.com ♦ Washington Post Defensive Player of the Year ♦ Three-year starter ♦ As a senior, had 149 tackles, 88 solo, 10 quarterback sacks, one interception, nine fumbles caused and seven fumbles recovered ♦ Had 168 tackles, including 39 tackles for loss, 13 quarterback sacks, three fumbles caused and three interceptions as a junior.			

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
JENKINS, Robert C 6-2, 300 Bronx, NY Nassau CC Started in 22 games at center for Nassau ♦ Allowed only three quarterback sacks in two seasons ♦ Set school record with 12 pancake blocks as a freshman ♦ Played center and defensive for three years in high school ♦ Had 66 tackles and five quarterback sacks as a senior.			
LATTIMORE, Keon WR 5-11, 190 Owings Mills Mount Saint Joseph's SuperPrep rated No. 6 player in Mid-Atlantic Region ♦ Ranked No. 78 player in Atlantic East Region by Rivals.com ♦ All-State ♦ Three-year starter ♦ As a senior, had 28 receptions for 346 yards and four touchdowns in seven games ♦ Had 643 yards rushing and 11 touchdowns ♦ Returned two kickoffs for touchdowns ♦ Had 1,294 yards rushing, 581 yards receiving and scored 23 touchdowns as a junior.			
LEMONS, Jermaine OL 6-3, 230 Tampa, FL Thomas Jefferson Ranked No. 18 defensive end nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Orlando Sentinel rated No. 82 player in Florida ♦ Honorable mention All-State ♦ Four-year starter ♦ Had 74 tackles and seven sacks as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 80 tackles, 11 quarterback sacks and four fumbles recovered ♦ Three-year letterman in basketball.			
MITCH, Ryan QB 6-3, 201 McLean, VA DeMatha SuperPrep All-American ♦ As a senior, completed 75 of 125 passes for 1,377 yards and 11 touchdowns ♦ Had more than 1,500 yards passing and 12 touchdowns as a junior ♦ Four-year letterman.			
MOORE, Dre DT 6-4, 270 Charlotte, NC Independence All-State ♦ Helped team to 13-0 record and state championship ♦ Had 107 tackles, 69 solo, 12 tackles for loss and three quarterback sacks in only varsity season.			
NIXON, Brandon OT 6-6, 325 Pottstown, PA Pottstown Ranked No. 15 player in Pennsylvania by SuperPrep ♦ Philadelphia Inquirer All-Southeast Pennsylvania ♦ Four-year starter ♦ Played offensive and defensive tackle ♦ Averaged over five pancake blocks per game as a senior ♦ Did not allow a quarterback sack as a junior.			
POWELL, Patrick DE 6-4, 250 Richmond, VA L.C. Bird Second-team All-State ♦ All-Region ♦ Three-year starter ♦ As a senior, had more than 100 tackles, 10.5 quarterback sacks and 38 quarterback pressures ♦ Set school record in shot put as a junior.			
SAVAGE, Omar OL/DE 6-4, 235 Piscataway, NJ Piscataway SuperPrep All-Region ♦ Two-time All-Conference ♦ Three-year starter ♦ Helped team to state championship as a senior ♦ Had 57 tackles, including 30 tackles for loss, three quarterback sacks and one fumble recovered ♦ As a junior, had 55 tackles, including 12 for loss, six sacks, three fumbles caused and two interceptions.			
WEATHERLY, Drew WR 6-4, 200 Georgetown, DE Sussex Central Gatorade Delaware Player of the Year ♦ Three-year starter at wide receiver and free safety ♦ As a senior, had 24 receptions for 415 yards and six touchdowns ♦ Had four interceptions ♦ Had 26 receptions for 585 yards and nine touchdowns as a junior ♦ Had 300 yards rushing and three touchdowns ♦ Returned four kicks for touchdowns ♦ Member of basketball team.			
WILSON, Josh CB 5-9, 176 Upper Marlboro, DE DeMatha SuperPrep All-Region ♦ All-State ♦ Had 27 receptions for 694 yards and six touchdowns as a senior ♦ Made five interceptions ♦ Member of track team.			
WOODS, Donnie OT 6-5, 285 Dade City, FL Thomas Jefferson PrepStar All-American ♦ SuperPrep All-American ♦ All-State ♦ Two-time All-Conference ♦ Four-year starter at offensive and defensive tackle ♦ Member of track, weightlifting and wrestling teams.			

A LOOK AT THE TERRAPINS

RESULTS

(11-3, 6-2)

0	Notre Dame	22
44	AKRON	14
10	FLORIDA STATE	37
45	EASTERN MICHIGAN	3
37	WOFFORD	8
48	at West Virginia	17
34	GEORGIA TECH	10
45	at Duke	12
59	at North Carolina	7
24	NORTH CAROLINA ST.	21
30	at Clemson	12
48	at Virginia	3
32	WAKE FOREST	14
	PEACH BOWL	
30	Tennessee	3

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING						
NAME	ATT	COMP	YARDS	Pct	TD	INT
McBrien	284	162	2497	57.0	15	10
Kelley	38	17	171	44.7	0	3
RUSHING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
Downs	208	1194	5.5	72	13	
Allen	60	407	6.8	70	8	
Perry	72	357	4.7	39	1	
McBrien	88	400	3.2	54	7	
RECEIVING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
Monroe	37	614	16.6	80	2	
Williams	28	562	20.1	55	2	
Harrison	20	369	18.5	69	2	
Downs	18	165	9.2	38	2	
DEFENSIVE LEADERS						
Tackles: Henderson 175, Joe 103, Starks 93.						
Interceptions: Henderson 8.5, Foxworth 5, Williams 4.						
Sacks: Henderson 8.5, Starks 6.5, Merriman 5.						
Tackles for Loss: Henderson 19, Starks 12.5, Joe 9.						

SCHEDULE

Aug. 28	at Northern Illinois (Thur.)
Sept. 6	at Florida State
Sept. 13	THE CITADEL
Sept. 20	WEST VIRGINIA
Sept. 27	at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 4	CLEMSON
Oct. 11	DUKE
Oct. 23	at Georgia Tech (Thur.)
Nov. 1	NORTH CAROLINA
Nov. 13	VIRGINIA (Thur.)
Nov. 22	at North Carolina State
Nov. 29	at Wake Forest

the non-conference schedule is weak.

Maryland will find out quickly whether it is a legitimate title contender when it plays its second game at Florida State.

"One of our major goals this season is to finally beat Florida State," junior cornerback Domonique Foxworth said. "It's realistic to say we could have a shot at the national championship if we get the BCS bid for the ACC, but it all starts with beating Florida State."

OFFENSE

Maryland has a returning starter at quarterback for the first time since Scott Milanovich in the mid-1990s. Scott McBrien went from surprise season-opening starter to honorable mention All-ACC in 2002. The southpaw ranked 12th nationally in efficiency rating and his 2,497 yards passing were fifth-most in school history.

McBrien enjoyed a superb spring camp and his confidence has soared thanks to a thorough understanding of Maryland's complex offensive system.

"Scott is a lot more poised and is light-years ahead of where he was a year ago. The big thing for him right now is that he understands the concepts and not just making the play," said offensive coordinator Charlie Taaffe, who coaches the quarterbacks.

As McBrien said, "Everything seems a lot easier right now ... I guess you could say that I'm reacting more and not thinking as much."

McBrien's experience has enabled Friedgen and Taaffe to expand the offense. The Terps have added more motion and installed a multitude of new sets. Friedgen felt the attack was "too vanilla" the past couple of seasons and has been anxious to implement a more diverse package similar to what he ran at Georgia Tech.

Maryland is loaded at tailback with senior Bruce Perry atop a crowded depth chart. Perry, a 5-foot-9 fifth-year senior, was the ACC Offensive Player of the Year in 2001, when he racked up 1,242 yards rushing, 359 yards receiving and 12 touchdowns. Plagued by injuries throughout his career, Perry missed most of last season with a strained stomach muscle, torn groin and sore shoulder.

He flashed his old form during spring camp, showing the initial burst, open field moves and breakaway speed that made him so productive as a sophomore.

The Terps also have Josh Allen, who gained 405 yards and had eight scores on just 60 carries as a freshman last season. He's more of a power back at 210 pounds and the perfect complement to Perry.



RANDY STARKS WAS A MAJOR FORCE IN THE MIDDLE IN 2002, MAKING 93 TACKLES.

PHOTO BY TOMASSO DEROSA

Ohio State transfer Sam Maldonado forced his way into the picture with a strong spring. A one-time starter at full-back for the Buckeyes, the 229-pounder could be utilized in short-yardage and goal-line situations.

Sophomore Mario Merrills and redshirt freshman J.P. Humber also look good.

Despite poor depth, Maryland has managed to field one of the league's most dominant offensive lines in recent years. That unit should remain a strength despite the loss of two All-ACC performers, Todd Wike and Matt Crawford.

Eric Dumas, who started all 14 games at left tackle, switches over to the right

left tackle. He was slated to redshirt as a true freshman, but impressed the staff so much he wound up playing in 13 games and earning a start.

Maryland has a pair of outstanding guards in Lamar Bryant and C.J. Brooks, and Kyle Schmitt appears to have grasped the mental aspects of playing center.

Friedgen has repeatedly called Jeff Dugan "the best blocking tight end in the ACC," and 6-8 Derek Miller does a good job catching the ball on short routes. Rob Abiamiri was moved from wide receiver to give the Terps a faster tight end capable of running deeper routes.

Six of the top seven receivers return, led by converted quarterback Latrez Harrison and fellow senior Jafar Williams. Steve Suter, the fastest player on the team, is expected to move from slot to wideout as part of Friedgen's effort to improve "our vertical passing game. Teams need to know that we're capable of hitting the long pass, and Suter is a guy who can get deep."

DEFENSE

The primary question with Maryland entering the season deals with finding a replacement for dominant middle linebacker E.J. Henderson, the Butkus Award winner.

Several veterans, including standout weakside linebacker Leon Joe, asked to be moved into the middle.

"There's a lot of guys who want to play that position right now and I keep telling them it's not the position, it's the guy who played it," Friedgen said during spring camp.

Sophomore D'Qwell Jackson ultimately emerged from the mix and enters August two-a-days as the projected starter. He could get a serious challenge from highly touted incoming freshman Wesley Jefferson, rated the nation's No. 1 prep linebacker by many recruiting experts. Jefferson, a 6-2, 231-pound prospect, chose Maryland over Miami and Ohio State among others and has NFL-prospect stamped on his forehead.

Joe, who possesses the speed of a safety, is the leading returning tackler after making 103 stops in 2002. Leroy Ambush returns as starter on the strong side.

Junior Randy Starks is the stud up front, a 304-pound load with great strength and footwork. He ranked third on the team with 93 tackles (12 for loss), had a team-high 17 quarterback hurries and six sacks despite routinely getting double-teamed.

"Randy is very athletic for his size and has a great burst. He doesn't stay blocked for very long," Friedgen said.

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

RB Bruce Perry

Emerging Star

DT Randy Starks

Top Newcomer

LB Wesley Jefferson

side to replace Crawford. Stephon Heyer, who possesses a massive wing span and wears a size 22 sneaker, will take over at

TERRAPINS SPRING ROSTER

No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN	No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN
97	Tosin Abori	DT	Sr	6-0	259	Mt. Rainier	48	William Kershaw	LB	So	6-3	217	Raeeford, NC
81	Paschal Abiamiri	WR	Fr	6-2	188	Randallstown	56	Jesse Klutitz	LS	So	6-3	250	Tappa
3	Rob Abiamiri	TE	Jr	6-3	223	Randallstown	79	Lou Lombardo	OT	Jr	6-6	306	Baltimore
	Yinka Adebayeku	RB	So	6-1	235	Silver Spring		Charles Luke	LB	Fr	6-1	202	Atlanta, GA
33	Josh Allen	TB	So	5-11	204	Bladensburg	43	Sam Maldonado	TB/FB	So	6-0	229	Harrison, NY
24	Leroy Ambush	LB	Sr	6-1	223	Frederick	7	Scott McBrien	QB	Sr	6-0	178	Rockville
91	Robert Armstrong	DT	Fr	6-4	307	Arlington, VA	68	Ryan McDonald	OG	So	6-2	287	Hagerstown
	Tom Augustyn	WR	So	6-0	193	Fairfax, VA	38	Gerrick McPherson	CB	So	5-11	195	Columbia
77	Russell Bonham	OG	So	6-4	305	Winston-Salem, NC	85	Dan Melendez	WR	So	6-2	175	Lancaster, PA
14	Matt Brant	FS	Fr	6-0	170	Chey Chase	8	Mario Merrill	TB	So	5-10	196	Columbia
74	C.J. Brooks	OT	Jr	6-6	323	Rex, GA	45	Shawne Merriman	LEO	So	6-3	246	Upper Marlboro
93	Davian Bryan	NT	Jr	5-11	278	Hyattsville	84	Derek Miller	TE	So	6-8	253	Carlisle, PA
73	Lamar Bryant	OG	Sr	6-3	308	Clinton	35	Michael Miller	LB	Fr	6-0	230	Aberdeen
37	Jamal Chance	CB	Sr	6-1	191	Ephrata, PA	46	Nick Novak	PK	Jr	6-0	196	Charlottesville, VA
21	Chris Choice	CB	Fr	5-11	195	Suilland	63	Patrick O'Brien	OG	Fr	6-5	305	Garden City, NY
49	Jamahl Cochran	LEO	Jr	6-0	246	Morristown, NJ		Aje Olufemi	DB	Jr	5-10	177	Silver Spring
47	Jon Condo	LEO	Jr	6-3	238	Philipsburg, PA	80	Ornie Onwemene	WR	Jr	6-0	184	Silver Spring
30	Curume Cox	CB	Sr	6-1	201	Arlington, VA	22	Rich Parson	WR	Jr	5-10	173	Newark, DE
9	Jason Crawford	TB	Jr	6-2	219	Forestville	60	Akil Patterson	OL	So	6-3	287	Frederick
26	Raymond Custis	FS	Jr	5-8	186	Germantown	1	Bruce Perry	TB	Sr	5-9	192	Philadelphia, PA
58	Ricardo Dickerson	LB	So	6-3	238	Hyattsville	36	Adam Podlesh	P	Fr	5-10	201	Pittsford, NY
64	Justin Duffie	DL	So	6-2	293	Gaithersburg	65	Matt Powell	OT	So	6-4	339	Fr. Washington
82	Jeff Dugan	TE	Sr	6-4	260	Allison Park, PA	88	Dave Quaintance	DT	Fr	6-5	263	Philadelphia, PA
75	Eric Dumas	OT	Sr	6-6	315	Atlanta, GA	39	Domonique Richmond	FS	Fr	6-0	195	Hagerstown
98	Randy Earle	LEO	Fr	6-3	214	N. Massespequa, NY		Max Rosenthal	P	So	5-11	185	Madison, CT
41	Kevin Eli	DE	Jr	6-4	272	Deptford, NJ	92	Darren Sanders	TE	Fr	6-4	248	Pomfret
	Daniel Ennis	PK	Fr	6-0	145	Sykesville	86	Brad Schell	TE	Fr	6-5	253	Spencerville
11	Orlando Evans	QB	Sr	6-0	187	Stockton, CA	72	Kyle Schmitt	C	Jr	6-5	302	Latrobe, PA
96	C.J. Feldheim	NT	Sr	6-3	287	Hereford	76	Henry Scott	DE	Jr	6-1	279	Baltimore
83	Derrick Fenner	WR	So	5-11	190	Hampton, VA	18	Maurice Shanks	WR	Jr	6-4	195	Hampton, VA
44	Bernie Fiddler	FB	Sr	6-1	240	Swedesboro, NJ	86	Aaron Smith	WR	So	6-5	201	West Point, NY
	Tim Fischer	WR	Jr	5-10	189	Oakdale, NY	23	Andrew Smith	SS	Jr	6-0	204	Fort Meade
78	Ryan Flynn	OT	Jr	6-4	266	Youngstown, OH	44	Jeris Smith	LB	Fr	6-2	235	Eldersburg
6	Domonique Foxworth	CB	Jr	5-11	173	Randallstown	40	Maurice Smith	FB	Jr	6-0	227	Waldorf
36	Alan Grantham	CB	Fr	5-9	185	Narristown, PA	54	Scott Smith	DE	Sr	6-4	255	Philadelphia, PA
17	Reuben Haigler	CB	Sr	6-0	179	New Cumberland, PA	57	Randy Starks	DT	Jr	6-4	304	Waldorf
4	Latrez Harrison	WR	Sr	6-3	223	Atlanta, GA	16	Joel Statham	QB	Fr	6-1	205	Chatsworth, GA
51	Andrew Henley	LB	Sr	5-11	239	Riverdale	67	Mike Steele	OL	So	6-5	309	Woodbine
70	Stephon Heyer	OT	So	6-6	293	Lawrenceville, GA	50	Paul Stellacci	LB	Fr	6-2	221	Carmel, NY
14	Sam Hollenbach	QB	Fr	6-5	221	Sellersville, PA	34	Steve Suter	WR	Jr	5-9	188	Manchester
36	David Holloway	LB	Fr	6-4	209	Stephentown, NY	61	Ed Tyler	OG	Sr	6-3	312	Franklinville, NJ
53	Reggie Holmes	LB	Fr	6-1	257	Bowie	27	Jolo Walker	WR	So	5-10	163	Carrollton, TX
20	J.P. Humber	TB	Fr	5-11	212	Lakeland, FL	15	Curtis Williams	FS	Jr	6-2	200	Huntington Station, NY
52	D'Qwell Jackson	LB	So	6-1	217	Largo, FL	19	Jafar Williams	WR	Sr	6-2	211	Philadelphia, PA
63	Robert Jenkins	C	Jr	6-2	310	Bronx, NY	10	Madieu Williams	FS	Sr	6-1	191	Lanham
32	Leon Joe	LB	Sr	6-1	223	Clinton	13	Dennard Wilson	SS	Sr	5-11	189	Upper Marlboro
99	Landon Jones	DE	Sr	6-4	248	Marion, OH	12	Marcus Wimbush	FS	Fr	5-11	207	Washington, DC
2	Chris Kelley	SS	Jr	6-2	209	Germantown	69	Donnie Woods	OT	Fr	6-5	299	Dade City, FL

2003 PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE	
QB	Scott McBrien, Sr.*/Joel Statham, Fr.
RB	Bruce Perry, Sr.*/Josh Allen, So.
FB	Bernie Fiddler, Sr./Ricardo Dickerson, Sr.
LT	Stephon Heyer, So./Donnie Woods OR Brandon Nixon, Fr.
LG	C.J. Brooks, Jr.*/Russell Bonham, So.
OC	Kyle Schmitt, Jr./Robert Jenkins, Jr.
RG	Lamar Bryant, Sr.*/Akil Patterson, So.
RT	Eric Dumas, Sr.*/Lou Lombardo, Jr.
TE	Jeff Dugan, Sr.*/Derek Miller, So.
WR	Latrez Harrison, Sr.*/Jafar Williams, Sr.
WR	Steve Suter, Jr./Dan Melendez, So.
PK	Nick Novak, Jr.*/Daniel Ennis, Fr.

DEFENSE	
DE	Scott Smith, Sr./Kevin Eli, Jr.
DT	C.J. Feldheim, Sr.*/Robert Armstrong, Fr.
DT	Randy Starks, Jr.*/Landon Jones, Sr.
DE	Jamahl Cochran, Jr.*/Shawne Merriman, So.
WLB	Leon Joe, Sr.*/Andrew Henley, Sr.
MLB	Wesley Jefferson, Fr.*/D'Qwell Jackson, So.
SLB	Leroy Ambush, Sr.*/William Kershaw, So.
CB	Curume Cox, Sr.*/Jamal Chance, Sr.
FS	Madieu Williams, Sr.*/Raymond Custis, Jr.
SS	Dennard Wilson, Sr.*/Andrew Smith, Sr.
CB	Domonique Foxworth, Jr.*/Reuben Haigler, Sr.
P	Adam Podlesh, So./Max Rosenthal, So.

NOTEBOOK

Maryland has three Thursday night games on the 2003 schedule. The Terps opener at Northern Illinois (Aug. 28), along with ACC games at Georgia Tech (Oct. 23) and at home against Virginia (Nov. 13) are all slated for the weeknight.

Some Maryland fans bristled at the change because it interferes with their traditional Saturday afternoon routine just as coach Ralph Friedgen and the program are requesting increased support.

Friedgen said the national exposure that comes along with playing on ESPN far outweighs the negatives.

"You have to understand the power of TV, and the exposure you get as a result. We're the only game on TV that night, so to not take advantage of that because some fans are out of their comfort zone, is foolish," Friedgen said. "I'm thinking of what's good for the whole program. The exposure that Maryland will receive as an institution ... we couldn't pay for that type of advertising. If television wants to honor us with that opportunity, I think there are too many plusses not to take advantage."

• After battling back from three knee injuries with an admirable determination and work ethic, Chris Kelley requested a switch from quarterback to safety. Coach Ralph Friedgen agreed, seeing enough promising young quarterbacks on the roster and a chance to give Kelley a chance to do something he wants.

Kelley, who was quite a middle line-backer in high school at Seneca Valley High, changed his mindset and his body — dropping 10 pounds and hitting the weights hard during the winter. The redshirt junior entered spring camp third on the depth chart at strong safety, but no one was betting against him earning playing time by the fall.

• Two other players seemed to adjust well to new positions during spring camp. Converted linebacker Ricardo Dickerson looked good working at fullback, while former wide receiver Rob Abiamiri thrived in the role of tight end.

• Ralph Friedgen spent most of spring camp riding around in a golf cart as a result of terrible pain from bulging disks and a bum right hip. He was scheduled for hip replacement surgery in the summer.

— Bill Wagner

MARYLAND

Evolving McBrien Leads the Way

Three games into the 2002 season, Scott McBrien was a mess. Maryland was 1-2, largely because the slightly-built lefthander had performed poorly as the new starting quarterback.

Having heard some boos after throwing two interceptions and no touchdowns in an embarrassing 37-10 loss to Florida State, McBrien needed something good to happen.

McBrien, remember, had entered 2002 spring practice competing with Chris Kelley for the starting job ... and wound up No. 1 by default when Kelley suffered his third knee injury. McBrien had little chance to build confidence, and struggled to learn Maryland's intricate offense.

In high-profile losses to Notre Dame and Florida State, he locked in on primary receivers and forced throws — essentially looking like he was in over his head.

"I was real down after the Florida State loss, so I went to see Coach Friedgen for a heart-to-heart," McBrien said. "He really picked me up. He told me we were going to start the season all over, to pretend the first three games never happened."

Friedgen's psychology worked wonders. McBrien looked like an

entirely different quarterback the following week against Eastern Michigan, passing for career-highs of 300 yards and three touchdowns.

Then he took a major step forward with a near-flawless effort at West Virginia — the team he left for Maryland two years earlier after being dropped from first to third team. McBrien braved the jeers and catcalls of angry fans in Morgantown to lead Maryland to a surprising 48-17 blowout.

"What I did against West Virginia was a major confidence booster. On the road, in a hostile environment, against my old team ... I wanted to play so well in that game and felt so good when I did," McBrien admitted. "I think that game is when my teammates started to believe in me."

McBrien's improvement mirrored that of the Terrapins, who went on an eight-game winning streak. The hard-throwing lefty with pinpoint accuracy wound up starting all 13 games and became the true leader of the team.

"It was a rags-to-riches story," he said. "I started so horribly and the road was so bumpy. To improve the way I did and help the team win 11 games was very gratifying." □



SCOTT MCBRIEN LEADS A TERP OFFENSE THAT HAS MANY PLAYMAKERS.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

Nose tackle C.J. Feldheim started 20 straight games before suffering a knee injury last season. He teams with Starks to give the Terps a solid tandem in the middle.

One of the more competitive battles has been at "Leo," a hybrid defensive end-line-backer position. Jamahl Cochran had a strong campaign in his first season as a starter, but Shawne Merriman was often spectacular in a reserve role. One of the two may be moved to another position to earn more playing time.

Defensive end is a real position of concern as there is no obvious replacement for the departed Durrand Roundtree. Senior Scott Smith will get first shot, but has a history of back problems and must really step up.

Secondary is the team's strength, as all four starters return and numerous backups are pushing for playing time. Domonique Foxworth, first team All-ACC at right corner, has great man-to-man coverage skills. Curome Cox, with 33 career starts, is a reli-



**MARYLAND
CERTAINLY HAS ALL
THE INGREDIENTS**

**NECESSARY TO WIN THE
ATLANTIC COAST
CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP
FOR THE SECOND TIME IN
THREE YEARS.**

able right corner.

Williams was second team All-ACC in his first season as starting free safety. He had numerous highlight reel hits in finishing fourth on the team in tackles (82), yet is versatile enough to cover like a corner.

Dennard Wilson is a former starting cornerback who made a smooth transition to strong safety while Andrew Smith returns as

the nickel back. Backup corners Jamal Chance and Reuben Haigler were too impressive during the spring to sit.

"We've got at least eight good guys who all deserve to play. It's a nice dilemma to have," said defensive coordinator Gary Blackney, who also coaches the secondary.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Maryland boasts one of the nation's top kickers in junior Nick Novak, a semifinalist for the Lou Groza Award last season. Novak, who enters his third season as a starter, was extremely consistent in 2002 — connecting on 24 of 28 field goal attempts, including three of four from 50 yards or more.

The Terps must replace one of the nation's top punters, Brooks Barnard, a two-time All-ACC selection who set a school record with a career average of 43.6 yards. Redshirt freshman Adam Podlesh had a year of seasoning under Barnard's tutelage and consistently kicks 40 yards-plus in practice.

— Bill Wagner

NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS

Instability can spread through a collegiate athletic program like an infection, rotting and destroying the foundation.

In 1997, North Carolina ranked third behind Florida State and Notre Dame with alumni in the National Football League. In December of that year, coach Mack Brown

"We're still overcoming a couple of recruiting classes that were not up to snuff, not up to par with the kind of players we want here," said Bunting, a former Tar Heel linebacker. "But we will get that done. We are getting that done."

In 2002, Bunting led a Carolina team

"In order for us to be a good football team, we have to play substantially better on defense," Bunting said. "We weren't very good last year. We didn't stop the run. We did not do a good job on third down."

"It will be open season when the freshmen get here in August. I see 10 to 12

Rebuilding Effort Starts Up Front

left North Carolina for Texas.

Layer by layer, the final remnants of the Brown era have since been peeled away, and the turbulent three seasons that followed his departure led to instability.

By last fall, attrition and poor recruiting had gnawed at the marrow of the junior and senior classes. At least 30 players who could have been in the program were no longer around for one reason or another.

Some of the blame falls on the school's athletic administration. North Carolina hired defensive coordinator Carl Torbush to replace Brown. Two years later, the school fired him on a Friday, rehired him on a Monday and a year later, fired him for good.

All of this left coach John Bunting and his staff, now in their third year, with a massive rebuilding project.

built on 73 percent sophomores and freshmen against a schedule that included Syracuse, Arizona State and Texas.

The deficiencies showed, particularly on defense, an area that once carried the North Carolina program. By midseason, the Tar Heels strung together undersized first-year players and a fullback to form a defensive line. After losing 31-0 at Wake Forest and moving fullback Madison Hedgecock to defensive end, Bunting gave a recruiting speech in his postgame comments.

"If anybody wants to play defensive line or linebacker at Carolina, it's a great time to come in and play," Bunting said.

Ineffective tackling and poor all-around defense continued to the bitter end, but so did Bunting's pitch to high-school prospects. He eventually signed a class ranked nationally anywhere from the high teens to top 10 by various recruiting services.

across the board potentially helping us."

Two of those freshmen are already making an impact. Linebacker Melik Brown and tailback Ronnie McGill entered school in January and participated in spring practice. Both appear to be impact players who should make a difference early in their careers.

"I'm not as strong as I want to be and the coaches want me to be," Brown said, "but I'm strong enough to at least play and make some things happen. I can only get stronger and keep working harder. Ronnie came in pretty strong, and he's getting stronger, so only good things can happen."

Brown, who moved to first on the spring depth chart ahead of junior Clarence Gaddy, originally signed with North Carolina's 2002 class. He failed to qualify academically, so he spent a semester in prep school before finally arriving at North Carolina.

McGill might have been the least-heralded of all the recruits in the latest class, but he could well turn out to be the brightest star. At 5-foot-11, 212 pounds, he has size, strength and speed.

"(College recruiters) didn't really know about me because I played quarterback," McGill said. "Playing quarterback in high school and then switching over to running back is not really good."

McGill earned his high school diploma in December of 2002 and moved to Chapel Hill early.

"I wanted to get in, get the plays down, get in some classes, get the col-

at a glance

2002: 3-9 overall; 1-7 ACC (8th)

COACH: John Bunting — At North Carolina: 11-14, 2 years; Overall: 49-28-2, 7 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 17; 7 offense, 8 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Darian Durant, TB Chad Scott, WR Jarwarski Pollock, FS Dexter Reid, TB Ronnie McGill, C Jason Brown, DT Chase Page

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: The offensive line is more experienced than it's been in years. QB Darian Durant makes the offense go, even if he has to overcome poor defense and an inconsistent running game. Talent

and depth at tailback is on the rise. Kicker Dan Orner is the real deal; he kicked three FGs longer than 50 yards in one game in 2002.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: Defense and special teams. The defense finished last against the run last year and still lacks proven talent. Except for field goals, the rest of the kicking game is weak.

OVERVIEW: This could be another long, tough season for the Tar Heels. The schedule is brutal, and the weapons appear to be insufficient at this point. It's hard to see this team winning more than four or five games out of 12.

TAR HEELS

LINEBACKER DOUG JUSTICE DID NOT PLAY LIKE A FRESHMAN LAST SEASON, FINISHING SECOND ON THE TEAM WITH 95 TACKLES.

PHOTO BY TOMASSO DEROSA



TAR HEELS RECRUITING

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
BETHEA , Bryan ATH PrepStar All-Region ♦ As a senior, had 1,277 yards rushing and 10 touchdowns ♦ Had 1,359 yards rushing and 14 touchdowns as a junior.	5-10, 175	Fayetteville	Douglas Byrd
BOWMAN , Adarius WR SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 10 wide receiver nationally ♦ Atlanta Journal Constitution Super Southern 100 ♦ Ranked No. 4 player in Tennessee by Knoxville News-Sentinel ♦ Two-time Class 2A Tennessee Mr. Football.	6-4, 205	Chattanooga, TN	Notre Dame
BROWN , Melik LB/DL Had 41 tackles, four quarterback sacks, and two fumbles recovered and returned for touchdown at Hargrave ♦ Helped high school team to state championship ♦ As a senior, had 57 tackles and 10 quarterback sacks ♦ Had 45 tackles, including 12 tackles for loss, 9.5 quarterback sacks, three fumbles caused and two fumbles recovered as a junior ♦ Graded over 90 percent on blocking assignments and made 16 pancake blocks.	6-3, 255	Camden, NJ	Hargrave Military Acad.
BYNUM , Shelton DL All-City ♦ Three-year starter on offense and defense ♦ Had 70 tackles, including 25 tackles for loss, and four quarterback sacks as a senior ♦ As a junior, helped team to state title ♦ Competed in shot put and discus.	6-5, 310	Ellenwood, GA	Cedar Grove
CANGELOSI , Nick QB PrepStar All-American ♦ As a senior, had 2,190 yards passing and 25 touchdowns, completing more than 60 percent of passes ♦ Had more than 5,000 career yards passing and 59 touchdowns.	6-4, 215	Haddon Heights, NJ	Camden Catholic
EDWARDS , Larry LB Rated No. 33 player in Florida by Orlando Sentinel ♦ Four-year starter ♦ Had 1,400 yards rushing as a senior ♦ Scored 27 TDs, 12 rushing and 15 receiving ♦ Had 18 tackles for loss, nine sacks and three fumbles caused.	6-3, 215	Tampa, FL	Wharton
GEDIN , Kory LB SuperPrep All-American, ranked No. 25 linebacker nationally ♦ Rated No. 15 inside linebacker nationally by Rivals.com ♦ As a senior, had 80 tackles, including 18 tackles for loss, six quarterback sacks, two interceptions, three fumbles caused and two fumbles recovered ♦ Had 225 yards rushing and four touchdowns.	6-2, 230	Washington, DC	Gonzaga
GREEN , Lionell DB Has two years eligibility remaining ♦ J.C. Gridwire All-American ♦ Rated No. 4 junior college player nationally by SuperPrep ♦ Had 56 tackles, three interceptions, 10 blocked kicks (six punts, four field goals), one fumble caused and one fumble recovered as a sophomore.	6-1, 180	Wharton, TX	Reedley (CA) CC
GRAY , Charlston OL Dallas Morning News Texas Top 100 ♦ Honorable mention All-State ♦ Two-time All-District ♦ Had 43 career pancake blocks ♦ Had 54 career tackles, including eight tackles for loss, and four quarterback sacks.	6-3, 265	Fort Worth	Dunbar
GUY , Kyndraus DL SuperPrep ranked No. 11 player in North Carolina ♦ The Charlotte Observer rated in top 25 players in North Carolina ♦ Played in North Carolina Shrine Game.	6-2, 260	Hope Mills	South View
HAMLETT , Jon TE Rated No. 14 tight end nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ SuperPrep ranked among top 35 players in Virginia ♦ Rated No. 19 player in Virginia by The Roanoke Times ♦ As a senior, had 22 receptions for 265 yards and one touchdown.	6-5, 250	Lynchburg, VA	Jefferson Forest
HANDS , Marcus DL SuperPrep All-American, ranked No. 9 player in North Carolina ♦ Atlanta Journal Constitution Super Southern 100 ♦ Rated among top 25 players in North Carolina by The Charlotte Observer ♦ Had 62 solo tackles, 10 sacks, five fumbles caused, one interception, two blocked field goals and one blocked punt as a senior.	6-6, 245	Wilmington	Laney
HEINZ , Roger QB PrepStar All-Region ♦ Orlando Sentinel Florida Top 100 ♦ Led team to three consecutive state championships (1999-2001) ♦ As a senior, had 1,800 yards passing and 18 touchdowns ♦ Had 342 yards rushing and seven touchdowns ♦ Had 2,400 yards passing and 28 touchdowns as a junior.	6-1, 195	Tallahassee, FL	N. Florida Christian Acad.

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
HOLLEY , Jesse WR SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 14 wide receiver nationally ♦ Set school records in receptions (106), receiving yards (1,449), and touchdown catches (27) ♦ Played quarterback in five games as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 44 receptions for 865 yards and 13 touchdowns ♦ Recruited to play basketball at North Carolina.	6-3, 190	Roselle, NJ	Abraham Clark
HUNTER , Terry DL PrepStar All-Region ♦ Ranked No. 4 player in North Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ The Charlotte Observer rated No. 5 player in North Carolina ♦ Three-year starter ♦ As a senior, had 110 solo tackles and 29 tackles for loss.	6-4, 245	Wendell	East Wake
KEDRA , Joe LB SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 19 linebacker nationally ♦ All-State ♦ Had 158 tackles and three interceptions as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 189 tackles and five interceptions.	6-4, 220	Maple Shade, NJ	Camden Catholic
LENAHAN , Scott OL PrepStar All-Region ♦ Atlanta Journal Constitution Top 50 in Georgia ♦ Three-year starter ♦ Played guard, center and defensive tackle ♦ Threw shot put and discus for track team.	6-1, 295	Marietta, GA	Harrison
LIVINGSTON , Donnell DL Ranked No. 26 player in Florida by Rivals.com ♦ All-State ♦ As a senior, had 65 tackles, including 32 tackles for loss, nine quarterback sacks and four fumbles caused ♦ Had 12 quarterback sacks as a junior.	6-3, 290	Sarasota, FL	Sarasota
MASON , Mike WR PrepStar Dream Team ♦ SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 13 wide receiver nationally ♦ Ranked No. 8 wide receiver nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Atlanta Journal Constitution Super Southern 100 ♦ Rated No. 4 player in North Carolina by The Charlotte Observer ♦ All-State ♦ Had 66 receptions for 1,100 yards and 12 touchdowns as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 62 receptions for 952 yards and 11 touchdowns.	6-0, 180	Rocky Mount	Rocky Mount
MCGILL , Ronnie RB Enrolled in January ♦ Most Valuable Player of North-South All-Star Game, with 119 yards rushing and three touchdowns ♦ Four-year starter ♦ As a senior, had 1,827 yards rushing and 29 touchdowns ♦ Scored six touchdowns on punt or kickoff returns ♦ Had 105 tackles ♦ Had 350 career tackles.	6-1, 205	Claver, SC	Claver
MITCHELL , Khalif DL Started at defensive end and tight end ♦ Had 68 yards rushing on eight carries at fullback position as a senior ♦ Threw shot put and discus for track team.	6-6, 285	Virginia Beach, VA	First Colonial
PERSON , Quinton ATH PrepStar All-Region ♦ The Charlotte Observer Top 25 in North Carolina ♦ Led team to state finals as a senior quarterback ♦ Had 1,083 yards rushing and 15 touchdowns ♦ Conference Player of the Year as a junior.	5-11, 175	Greenville	North Pitt
PRICE , Kenny DL Ranked No. 33 player in Virginia by SuperPrep ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ Virginian-Pilot All-Tidewater ♦ Three-year starter on defensive and offensive lines ♦ As a senior, had 87 tackles and nine quarterback sacks.	6-4, 280	Virginia Beach, VA	Kempsville
SPARKMAN , Fred LB SuperPrep All-American ♦ Rated No. 16 player in Tennessee by Knoxville News-Sentinel ♦ Tennessee Mr. Football ♦ Four-year starter at linebacker and running back ♦ Had 122 tackles, including 21 for loss, six sacks, four fumbles caused, three fumbles recovered, two point after attempts blocked, three punts blocked and four passes broken up as a senior ♦ Had 1,221 yards rushing, averaging 7.8 yards per carry.	6-2, 215	Columbia, TN	Central Columbia
TAYLOR , Kareen DB Fork Union Most Valuable Player as junior and senior ♦ Had 44 quarterback sacks from linebacker and safety positions ♦ Blocked 12 punts ♦ As a junior, had 27 quarterback sacks.	6-0, 200	Hopewell, VA	Fork Union Military Acad.
THOMAS , Isaiah DL SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 7 player in North Carolina ♦ Ranked No. 3 player in North Carolina by The Charlotte Observer ♦ All-State on offense and defense ♦ As a senior, had 91 tackles, 12 quarterback sacks and seven fumbles caused ♦ Had 79 tackles, 10 quarterback sacks and five fumbles caused as a junior.	6-4, 305	Winston-Salem	Carver

A LOOK AT THE TAR HEELS

RESULTS

(3-9, 1-7)

21	MIAMI (Ohio)	27
30	at Syracuse	22
21	TEXAS	52
13	GEORGIA TECH	21
38	at Arizona State	35
17	NORTH CAROLINA STATE	34
27	at Virginia	37
0	at Wake Forest	31
7	MARYLAND	59
12	CLEMSON	42
14	at Florida State	40
23	DUKE	21

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING						
NAME	ATT	COMP	YARDS	PCT	TD	INT
Durant	248	147	2123	59.3	77	16
Stephens	157	80	914	51.0	39	4
RUSHING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
Lewis	122	543	4.5	32	2	
Parker	70	236	3.4	50	1	
Carey	56	216	3.9	17	0	
Durant	88	159	1.8	27	2	
RECEIVING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
Aiken	68	990	14.6	77	4	
Borders	32	499	15.6	74	5	
Pollock	31	464	15.0	65	4	
Blizzard	20	363	18.1	60	2	
DEFENSIVE LEADERS						
Tackles: Reid 166, Justice 97, Stewart 85.						
Interceptions: Waddell 2.						
Sacks: Chapman 3, Knight 3, Stewart 3.						
Tackles for Loss: Reid 6, Stewart 5, Page 4.5.						

SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	FLORIDA STATE
Sept. 6	SYRACUSE
Sept. 20	at Wisconsin
Sept. 27	at North Carolina State
Oct. 4	VIRGINIA
Oct. 11	at East Carolina
Oct. 18	ARIZONA STATE
Oct. 25	at Clemson
Nov. 1	at Maryland
Nov. 8	WAKE FOREST
Nov. 15	at Georgia Tech
Nov. 22	DUKE

lege life out of the way before everything really bombarded us," McGill said.

He showed his stuff in the spring game, gaining 104 yards on 24 carries and scoring a touchdown on a 10-yard run on which he dragged several potential tacklers. He did it all on a sore ankle that forced him to miss several practices leading up to the game.

"I think I might have earned the respect of some of the older guys out there," he said.

OFFENSE

Ronnie McGill isn't the only newcomer on offense. Chad Scott, a junior transfer from Kentucky who sat out last season, finished the spring as the starting tailback. Scott isn't particularly big, at 5-9, 184 pounds, but he's tough, quick and fast.

"Chad Scott can take a five-yard gain and make it into a 20-yard gain," Bunting said. "He can take a 15-yard gain and turn it into a 45-yarder or a touchdown. That is the kind of speed that he has."

Carolina also returns Jacque Lewis, who led North Carolina in rushing last year with 592 yards (4.4 per carry), and senior Willie Parker. Andre' Williams, one of the top players out of North Carolina his senior year of high school, has returned from back surgery and rehabilitation and could play both fullback and tailback.

The offensive line lacks depth but brings more experience than recent North Carolina lines. Players such as senior Jeb Terry, a starting guard, and junior Skip Seagraves, a starting tackle, have been in the program long enough to gain the benefits of the conditioning program instituted by strength coach Jeff Connors three years ago.

"Everything is coming to fruition," Terry said. "The lines on both sides of the ball have gotten so much stronger, and everyone has gotten quicker, too, that first step off the ball. It's really noticeable this spring, even more than last year. Our hips are becoming more flexible and more powerful."

Jarwarski Pollock, a junior who has only played one season, is the veteran of the receivers. Derrele Mitchell, a 6-3, 205-pound sophomore, was one of the top athletes coming out of high school in North Carolina. Danny Rumley, a 6-4, 215-pound sophomore from Alabama, is starting to learn his role.

Junior Chris Curry moved from safety to receiver, and freshman Duante Fields showed some real promise in the spring.

"The guy who stands out right now is Jarwarski Pollack," Bunting said. "Derrele has done some good things. Rumley has-



JAWARSKI POLLOCK HAD A TEAM-HIGH 31 CATCHES FOR 464 YARDS AND FOUR TOUCHDOWNS LAST SEASON.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

done some good things, particularly with some of the shorter routes. He's not necessarily a deep-ball guy, but he's strong and a big target."

The unquestioned leader of the offense is quarterback Darian Durant, who led the ACC in total offense by averaging 285.8 yards a game in 2002, despite missing four games with a broken thumb.

His value became even more apparent when he suffered that injury in the second half against Virginia in the sixth game of the year. Without him, Carolina's offense disappeared.

North Carolina would not have beaten Duke in the season finale without Durant making an early return. He completed 21 of 35 for 262 yards, one touchdown and moved the team into position for the winning field goal in the game's waning moments.

DEFENSE

Not since Mack Brown's first two seasons at North Carolina, when the Tar

Heels went 2-20, has Carolina's defense been as porous as it was last season.

The Tar Heels made progress in the spring after finishing last in the ACC in rushing defense. Still, the progress didn't seem to be nearly enough. The coaching staff will look long and hard at the freshmen in August to determine which ones can help immediately.

Bunting signed eight defensive linemen and five linebackers, including Melik Brown.

"What I'm really anxious to do is get those freshman linebackers in here, because they have a lot of speed," Bunting said.

Safety Dexter Reid again leads the secondary. Reid practices and plays exactly the way coaches want — all out, all the time.

"Dexter is an outstanding leader on and off the field," sophomore linebacker Jeff Longhany said. "He keeps you straight. He makes sure everybody is doing the right thing."

Sophomores Tommy Richardson and Mahlon Carey are battling for the safety position opposite Reid. Carey burned his redshirt year late last season to help the team when injuries decimated the tailback position. He showed some real instincts and promise as a runner, but the Tar Heels need him on defense.

Starting cornerback Michael Waddell suffered a broken leg last fall and missed spring practice, but he's expected to return for summer camp. Sophomore Cedrick Holt is pushing senior Derrick Johnson at the other corner spot.

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

QB Darian Durant

Emerging Star

FS Dexter Reid

Top Newcomer

TB Ronnie McGill

"Ced is a quiet, shy guy, but he makes plays," Reid said. "And that's what football is all about."

The player who could make the biggest difference in the secondary is Lionell Green, rated by several recruiting services as the top cornerback in junior college in 2002. He will be in camp come August, ready to compete for one of those starting positions at corner.

NORTH CAROLINA

TAR HEELS SPRING ROSTER

No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN	No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN
17	Matt Baker	QB	So	6-2	213	Rochester Hills, MI	34	Mark McTamney	DB	Fr	5-10	175	Baltimore, MD
90	Jermicus Banks	DT	Jr	6-4	262	Raleigh	62	David Mirazo	OG	Sr	6-2	285	El Paso, TX
70	Steven Bell	C/OG	So	6-3	272	Greensboro	1	Derrelle Mitchell	WR	So	6-3	205	Winston-Salem
41	Alden Blizzard	DE	Fr	6-3	250	Laurel, MD	92	Issac Mooring	DT	Sr	6-3	261	Tarboro
89	Bobby Blizzard	TE	Sr	6-3	273	Hampton, VA	20	Michael Norton	PK	Fr	5-10	173	Laurinburg
19	Justin Boaz	SS	Jr	5-10	202	Pilot Mountain	32	Dokun Ologoke	FB	Jr	5-10	216	Raleigh
72	Jason Brown	C	Jr	6-3	318	Henderson	18	Tom O'Leary	QB	So	6-1	190	Waxhaw
58	Melik Brown	LB	Fr	6-1	255	Camden, NJ	10	Dan Orner	PK	Sr	5-8	170	Warwick, NY
29	Ronnie Bryant	FS	So	6-0	203	Durham	95	Chase Page	DT	Jr	6-5	286	Mt. Pleasant, SC
57	Devlen Bullard	LB	Jr	6-1	232	Red Springs	15	Willie Parker	TB	Sr	5-11	207	Clinton
83	Lewis Burnham	TE	Fr	6-4	263	Moorestown, NJ	95	Justin Phillips	TE	So	6-4	230	Pittsboro
23	Mahlon Carey	SS	So	6-1	211	Marietta, GA	89	Tony Pigford	DT	Sr	6-3	259	Teachey
87	Brian Chacos	TE	So	6-4	281	Darien, CT	5	Jarwaski Pollock	WR	Jr	5-8	170	Bradenton, FL
94	Donti Coats	DT	Sr	6-3	300	Chesapeake, VA	42	Brian Rackley	DE	Fr	6-5	239	Tallahassee, FL
40	Rikki Cook	FB	So	6-0	243	Montclair, NJ	49	Xavier Raine	DE	Fr	6-3	236	Stone Mountain, GA
61	Calvin Covington	LB	Jr	6-2	220	Brax, NY	78	Kyle Ralph	OG	So	6-4	288	Cincinnati, OH
12	Chris Curry	WR	Jr	6-1	198	Fayetteville	24	Dexter Reid	FS	Sr	6-0	189	Norfolk, VA
80	Tommy Davis	DE	So	6-2	251	Dudley	97	Mickey Rice	DT	Fr	6-0	289	Union, SC
45	John DeShields	SS	So	6-1	201	Boca Raton, FL	8	Tommy Richardson	SS	So	6-1	210	Miami, FL
43	Jacques Dumas	DE	Jr	6-6	264	Asheboro	55	Jonathan Ridge	OL	So	5-11	250	Randleman
93	John Dunn	TE	Jr	6-5	254	Hendersonville	11	Clay Roberson	LB	Sr	6-1	231	Bethel
4	Darian Durant	QB	Jr	5-11	218	Florence, SC	31	Paul Roberts	P	Sr	6-2	211	McBee, SC
3	Davante Fields	WR	Fr	6-0	159	Wellington, FL	14	Topher Roberts	PK	Sr	6-1	201	Simpsonville, SC
14	Ian Firestone	WR	Fr	6-0	182	Sinking Spring, PA	19	Danny Rumley	WR	So	6-4	215	Birmingham, AL
37	Clarence Gaddy	LB	Jr	6-2	233	Burnsville	82	Brandon Russell	WR	Sr	5-11	190	Decatur, GA
36	James Gibson	FB	Jr	6-2	260	Alexandria, VA	6	Chad Scott	TB	Jr	5-9	184	Plant City, FL
21	Michael Gilmore	WR	So	5-11	173	Greenville, SC	56	Leon Scroggins	LB	Jr	5-11	217	Dallas, TX
61	Warren Green	DS	So	6-2	226	Dunn	75	Skip Seagraves	OT	Jr	6-5	287	Burlington
16	Jared Hall	QB	Jr	6-2	197	Winston-Salem	69	Jonas Seawright	DT	Jr	6-6	338	Orangeburg, SC
26	Michael Harris	SS	Sr	5-11	201	Rougemont	60	Arthur Smith	OG	So	6-4	287	Memphis, TN
6	Chris Hawkins	CB	Jr	5-10	184	Kinston	48	Thomas Sperring	LB	So	5-10	221	Gainesville, FL
44	Madison Hedgecock	FB/DE	Jr	6-3	260	Wallburg	7	C.J. Stephens	QB	Sr	6-3	212	Gainesville, FL
27	Drayton Henderson	RB	So	5-11	193	Charlotte	77	Jeb Terry	OG	Sr	6-6	308	Dallas, TX
98	Kendall High	DE	So	6-4	271	Salisbury	31	Rashad Tindall	FS	Fr	6-3	191	Wilmington
13	Cedrick Holt	CB	So	5-11	176	Wadesboro	18	Michael Waddell	CB	Sr	5-11	183	Ellerbe
73	Drew Hunter	OT	So	6-7	302	Garner	28	D.J. Walker	SS	Fr	6-0	184	Pisgah Forest
44	Martin Jernigan	LB	Jr	6-0	230	Dunn	56	Greg Warren	DS	Sr	6-3	240	Mt. Olive
2	Derrick Johnson	CB	Sr	5-9	178	Upper Marlboro, MD	16	Jacoby Watkins	CB	Fr	6-0	176	Laurinburg
53	Doug Justice	LB	So	6-2	241	Port Orange, FL	34	Andre' Williams	TB	Sr	6-0	215	Durham
33	John Lafferty	P	Sr	5-10	193	Valdese	25	Lance Williams	WR	Jr	6-0	191	New Haven, CT
20	Jacque Lewis	TB	Jr	5-10	197	Elizabeth City	12	Linwood Williams	WR	Jr	6-0	182	Elizabeth City
52	Jeff Longhany	LB	So	6-3	245	Wade	71	Jupiter Wilson	OG	Sr	6-3	308	Chesapeake, VA
39	Tandon Mardis	FS	So	6-1	185	Fayetteville	68	Chris Woods	OT	Fr	6-3	289	Columbia, SC
9	London Mariani	QB	Sr	6-2	198	Morganton	45	David Wooldridge	P/PK	Fr	6-1	186	Advance
25	Ronnie McGill	TB	Fr	5-11	209	Claver, SC	54	Victor Worsley	LB	Fr	6-1	241	Battleboro
76	Willie McNeill	OT	Jr	6-5	301	Wagram, NC	29	Wallace Wright	WR	So	6-0	185	Fayetteville

2003 PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE	
QB	Darian Durant, Jr./C.J. Stephens, Sr.
RB	Chad Scott, Jr./Jacque Lewis, Jr.*
FB	James Gibson, Jr./Dokun Ologoke, Jr.
FL	Jarwaski Pollock, Jr./Brandon Russell, Sr.
SE	Derrelle Mitchell, So./Danny Rumley, So.
TE	Bobby Blizzard, Sr./John Dunn, Jr.
LT	Willie McNeill, Jr./Drew Hunter, So.
LG	Kyle Ralph, So.* OR Jupiter Wilson, Sr.
C	Jason Brown, Jr./Steven Bell, So.
RG	Jeb Terry, Sr./Chris Woods, Fr.
RT	Skip Seagraves, Jr./Brian Chacos, So.
PK	Dan Orner, Sr./Topher Roberts, Sr.

DEFENSE	
DE	Tommy Davis, So.*/Alden Blizzard, Fr.
LT	Chase Page, Jr.* OR Issac Mooring, Sr.
RT	Donti Coats, Sr.*/Jonas Seawright, Jr.
DE	Jacques Dumas, Jr.*/Madison Hedgecock, Jr.
LB	Melik Brown, Fr./Clarence Gaddy, Jr.*
LB	Doug Justice, So.*/Devlen Bullard, Jr.
LB	Clay Roberson, Sr./Jeff Longhany, So.
CB	Derrick Johnson, Sr./Cedrick Holt, So.
CB	Michael Waddell, Sr.*/Chris Hawkins, Jr.
SS	Tommy Richardson, So. OR Mahlon Carey, S.
FS	Dexter Reid, Sr.*/Rashad Tindall, Fr.
P	John Lafferty, Sr.*/Paul Roberts, Sr.

NOTEBOOK

Injuries played a big role in the demise of North Carolina's defense in 2002. For the Tar Heels to improve this season, they'll have to improve their overall depth.

The Tar Heels had little experience along the defensive front when the season began, and life grew tougher when the defensive line and the linebackers seemed to collectively fall apart with injuries.

In the spring, Carolina avoided major debilitating injuries, but nagging injuries limited the availability of several players.

Chase Page moved from offensive line to defensive line last year, and had to learn on the run. He could have used a full spring to hone his skills, but missed practice time with a strained hamstring. Rikki Cook, a transfer from Rutgers who will likely start at fullback, missed the spring game after having some minor knee surgery the final week of spring practice.

Linebacker Victor Worsley was expected to make an immediate impact as a freshman last year, but suffered injuries in preseason camp and didn't contribute last fall during his first season on campus. Worsley then had shoulder surgery during the offseason and missed spring drills. He should be ready for summer camp. Offensive lineman Arthur Smith missed the spring after having foot surgery in January.

• Several players switched positions during the spring. Madison Hedgecock moved to defense end from fullback. Brian Chacos moved from tight end to offensive tackle. Issac Mooring and Jermicus Banks moved from defensive end to defensive tackle. Chris Curry moved from strong safety to wide receiver. D.J. Walker moved from receiver to strong safety. Mahlon Carey moved from tailback to strong safety.

• Andre' Williams played some fullback in the spring, but more important, he returned full speed from a back injury that kept him out for most of 2002. Williams was ranked by many as the top prospect in the state of North Carolina as a high school senior, and he got off to a strong start at North Carolina as a freshman. He had back surgery following that season, and his future in football seemed questionable. His return can only help a team that's been searching for a productive runner since Jon Linton rushed for more than 1,000 yards in 1997.

— Eddy Landreth

NORTH CAROLINA

QB's U-turn Puts Heels on Right Track

When quarterback Darian Durant walked on the field against Duke in the final game of North Carolina's 2002 season, he ended one of the more bizarre sideshows in ACC football history.

In February of 2002, Durant announced that he planned to transfer. On April 1, he made a U-turn and decided to stay.

Some of his teammates felt betrayed by his original plan and were not happy with his return. When Durant returned from a broken thumb ahead of schedule and played at Duke, he won his teammates' hearts by putting his health and career on the line for a 2-9 team. He completed 21 of 35 passes for 262 yards and a touchdown, and he engineered the drive that led to the game-winning field goal as time expired.

"Those guys know how much pain I was in going into that Duke game," Durant said. "I was risking my whole career on one game. When they see a guy give it up for the team like that, it gets the respect from them. That really helped us out a lot coming into the offseason."

"I know there was still some speculation about my decision last spring. With me coming back for the Duke

game, it showed the team and all our supporters how dedicated I was."

In less than a year's time, he evolved from Benedict Durant to the Tar Heels' unquestioned leader.

"It did a lot," offensive guard Jeb Terry of Durant's decision to play against Duke. "On the offensive line, we play injured all season. When you have a quarterback who is going to do that, it just brings you all together."

"We knew he was for real, but that just reinforced it."

Any questions about Durant being the starter also have been answered. The offense fell apart after Durant suffered his broken thumb in the seventh game of the season, showing just how much the Tar Heels need Durant.

"Now that everything is behind us, everybody looks to me as the leader of this team," said Durant, who led the ACC in total offense per game in 2002 with 285.8 yards an outing.

"I have the respect of the guys."

"Everybody has my back out there. I can't win this game by myself. ... I'm just really excited about the direction the program is headed. I have two years left, which is an eternity, so I'm just ready to go and get things started." □



DURANT'S DECISION TO RETURN WAS GOOD NEWS FOR THE TAR HEELS.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

SPECIAL TEAMS

The coaching staff committed extra time and effort toward special teams during Bunting's first two seasons ... but still experienced unsatisfactory results. That's why Bunting moved defensive line coach James Webster, who will also remain assistant head coach, to special teams' coordinator.

"The situation with our special teams has confounded me over the past two years," Bunting said. "I don't like the fact that we were last in many categories, so I'm going to assign my warhorse, James Webster, to straighten that out."

One of his first duties, Webster says, is to perform a more thorough evaluation of the players.

"Just like any other phase of the game, you want to get your best players on the field," Webster said. "What this will allow me to do during workouts is walk around and evaluate our players. Before,

when I was coaching defensive ends, I had to look at defensive ends and see what they were doing.

N

OT SINCE MACK BROWN'S FIRST TWO SEASONS AT NORTH CAROLINA, WHEN THE TAR HEELS WENT 2-20, HAS CAROLINA'S DEFENSE BEEN AS POROUS AS IT WAS LAST SEASON.

"We put a lot of time into special teams," Webster said, "but each coach

also had a position to coach. Your mental focus and your physical time were always divided. Now I can give all my time to every phase of special teams and try to develop a core group of guys."

Coverage and returns have been inconsistent the past two seasons and must be addressed. This is where some incoming freshmen could play a role.

Net punting will need to improve as well, especially given the questions around the defense. The burden of improving punting rests on senior John Lafferty, who averaged just 36.6 yards last season.

Senior Dan Ormer's leg provides Carolina's one area of strength in special teams. He kicked three field goals of 50 yards or longer in a victory at Syracuse in 2002, including a school-record 55-yarder. He also kicked the game-winning 47-yard field goal against Duke on the final play of the game.

— Eddy Landreth





N.C. STATE

WOLFPACK

N.C. State's most anticipated spring practice in years ended with the offense and defense brawling after a goal-line play, a scene that seemed more funny than ferocious.

Players were laughing as they threw punches in the end zone, leaping on top

the Wolfpack from a middle-of-the-road ACC team to a national power.

The most important piece, Rivers, is in place thanks to some combination recruiting work from the former and current regimes; former coach Mike O'Cain got a commitment from Rivers, and Amato

outran and outplayed the Irish for a 28-6 win.

That result, combined with N.C. State's 11 victories and the return of Rivers and star tailback T.A. McLendon, has the Wolfpack anticipating a Top 10 ranking in the preseason (*Lindy's* has

The Pieces Are In Place

of the scrum as if it were a swimming pool. The final score of the Red/White Game? N.C. State — by a knockout.

"That wasn't staged," senior defensive end Terrance Chapman said of the fight. "That was real."

Real?

"Yeah," he said. "And it was fun."

Football is definitely fun for N.C. State these days. After going 11-3 in 2002, the Wolfpack enter 2003 ranked somewhere near the Top 10 while dreaming of something even bigger. After the brawl, players helped each other to their feet, raised their helmets and shouted, "National Champions!"

That wasn't staged, either. That was real.

"If we don't win the national championship this season, it will be our fault," said receiver Richard Washington. "We've got everything we need. N.C. State will be a dynasty."

The centerpiece, quarterback Philip Rivers, will be a senior this season, his last chance for the individual and team superlatives he craves.

"I think we can definitely do it," Rivers said of the national championship. "We're going to start the season ranked high enough; we play the defending national champions (at Ohio State on Sept. 13); and we're in a league that is getting more and more respect each year. All the parts are there."

Indeed, three years after being hired by his alma mater, coach Chuck Amato has almost completed the task of turning

solidified that by making Rivers the first recruit he visited roughly 24 hours after replacing O'Cain in January 2000.

With a few exceptions — receiver Jericho Cotchery, tackle Chris Colmer, guard Sean Locklear — the rest of the roster belongs solely to Amato, the longtime Florida State assistant coach who opened a monster pipeline from Florida to Raleigh. Amato has stocked his defense with Florida speed, including linebackers Pat Thomas and Oliver Hoyte and defensive backs Marcus Hudson, Greg Golden, Troy Graham and Andre Maddox.

"Speed is everything," Amato said. "I really think we'll be a faster team this season than we were last season."

The Wolfpack was plenty fast last season. Ask Notre Dame, which made a run at the national championship game before settling for the Gator Bowl, where N.C. State

them at No. 19 to start).

By the time most of the polls come out, perhaps voters will have forgotten, or forgiven, that N.C. State scheduled two Division I-AA teams in 2002. On the other hand, the Wolfpack manhandled Florida State and Notre Dame in their final two games of the season.

Rivers is hoping to parlay that team respect into the ultimate individual honor, the Heisman Trophy. He was mentioned as an outside Heisman candidate last season until the Wolfpack lost three consecutive games late in the season, to Georgia Tech, Maryland and Virginia.

"Of course it's a goal," Rivers said. "If I'm a candidate, that means the team is winning, so that would be a great thing. Anyone who grows up dreaming

at a glance

WOLFPACK

2002: 11-3 overall; 5-3 ACC (4th)

COACH: Chuck Amato — At N.C. State and overall: 26-12, 3 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 14; 7 offense, 5 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Philip Rivers, TB T.A. McLendon, WR Jericho Cotchery, OT Chris Colmer, DE Terrance Chapman, LB Manny Lawson, S Andre Maddox, CB A.J. Davis

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: The offense ranks among the nation's most dangerous, led by Rivers, McLendon and a group of talented receivers. The Wolfpack defense should be loaded with talent.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: The kicking game has to improve, especially punter Austin Herbert and kicker Adam Kiker. The defense is talented but young, so the Wolfpack must grow up quickly.

OVERVIEW: Coming off the best season in school history, with the record-setting 11 victories and a Gator Bowl victory against Notre Dame, the Wolfpack enters 2003 with legitimate hopes of playing its way into the national title picture. The offense scored 32.9 points per game last year and should be better this year. The defense will be faster, but might need time to develop.

PHILIP RIVERS IS RANKED FIFTH IN ACC HISTORY WITH 8,982 CAREER PASSING YARDS.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

For more coverage of the Wolfpack, visit www.ncstate.rivals.com

WOLFPACK RECRUITING

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
BARRETT, Lamart WR Had 29 receptions for 560 yards and 10 touchdowns as high school senior wide receiver ♦ Completed six touchdown passes as quarterback.	6-1, 190	Miami Springs, FL	Old Avon Farm Prep
BLACKMAN, Darrell RB Parade All-American ♦ SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 5 player in Pennsylvania ♦ PrepStar Dream Team ♦ Ranked No. 6 running back nationally by Rivals.com ♦ All-State ♦ As a senior, had 2,323 yards rushing and 22 touchdowns on 220 carries ♦ Had 2,457 yards rushing and 32 touchdowns as a junior.	6-1, 200	Williamsport, PA	Williamsport Area
BROOKS, Raymond DE/LB SuperPrep All-American, ranked No. 12 player in Pennsylvania ♦ Rivals.com rated No. 18 defensive end nationally and No. 9 player in Pennsylvania ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Averaged more than 10 tackles per game as a senior.	6-4, 240	Williamsport, PA	Williamsport Area
BROWN, Martrel LB Rated No. 63 outside linebacker nationally by Rivals.com ♦ SuperPrep ranked No. 31 player in North Carolina ♦ County Defensive Player of the Year ♦ As a senior, had 165 tackles and 12 quarterback sacks.	6-3, 240	Pembroke	Purnell Sweet
CHARLES, Maurice DE SuperPrep ranked No. 36 player in Florida ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ Had 148 tackles, nine sacks, 12 fumbles caused and seven fumbles recovered as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 85 tackles and 19 sacks.	6-3, 225	Miami, FL	Carol City
COVINGTON, Kennie DE SuperPrep ranked No. 41 prep linebacker nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Ranked No. 5 player in North Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ Two-time All-Conference ♦ As a senior, had 1,056 yards rushing and 15 TDs.	6-3, 265	Laurinburg	Jones County JC
DAVIS, Reggie RB Rivals.com ranked No. 15 all-purpose running back nationally ♦ Rated No. 82 player in Florida by SuperPrep ♦ Honorable mention All-State ♦ Tallahassee Offensive Player of the Year ♦ Had 1,597 yards rushing and 15 touchdowns as a senior ♦ As a junior, averaged 8.8 yards per carry.	6-2, 220	Tallahassee, FL	Godby
DENNISON, Brian RB PrepStar All-American ♦ Rated No. 14 running back nationally by Rivals.com ♦ SuperPrep ranked No. 62 player in Florida ♦ Rated No. 42 player in Florida by Orlando Sentinel ♦ As a senior, had 1,806 yards rushing and 21 TDs ♦ Had 1,056 yards rushing and 31 TDs, averaging 11.6 yards per carry, as a junior.	5-11, 195	Jacksonville, FL	Mandarin
DERVIL, Guerlin LB Honorable mention All-State ♦ All-District ♦ Had 64 tackles and five quarterback sacks as a senior.	6-3, 220	Jacksonville, FL	White
GREEN, Chad DE SuperPrep All-American, ranked No. 22 linebacker nationally ♦ Rated No. 15 weakside defensive end nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Three-time All-Area ♦ Played linebacker, wide receiver, tight end and defensive end ♦ As a senior, had 22 receptions for 323 yards in an injury-shortened season.	6-6, 220	Rocky Mount	Northern Nash
HAWKINS, Chris QB Rated No. 28 athlete nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Ranked No. 8 player in North Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ Had almost 1,500 yards passing as a senior ♦ Runs 4.4 in the 40-yard dash.	6-3, 190	Henderson	Southern Vance
HEATH, Garland S Rivals.com ranked No. 38 defensive back nationally ♦ Rated No. 78 player in Florida by SuperPrep ♦ Orlando Sentinel Dandy Dozen ♦ As a senior, had 34 tackles and three interceptions ♦ Runs 4.4 in the 40-yard dash.	6-2, 190	Belle Glade, FL	Glades Central
HEPPE, Kalani OL Rivals.com ranked No. 46 offensive guard nationally ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Rated No. 32 player in Virginia by SuperPrep ♦ All-State ♦ All-District.	6-4, 270	Beaeton, VA	Liberty
HOLLOMAN, Phillip DB Rated No. 30 player in Virginia by Rivals.com ♦ As a senior, had five interceptions and returned a kickoff for touchdown ♦ Runs 4.31 in the 40-yard dash ♦ Three-time qualifier for state titles in 100-meter dash.	5-11, 185	Norfolk, VA	Lake Taylor

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
JEAN, Jamesly TE Rivals.com ranked No. 11 tight end nationally ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Rated No. 42 player in Florida by SuperPrep ♦ Had 20 receptions for 325 yards and five touchdowns as a senior.	6-5, 220	Tampa, FL	Jefferson
JONES, Ernest LB Rated No. 46 outside linebacker nationally by Rivals.com ♦ TheInsiders.com ranked No. 26 outside linebacker nationally ♦ As a senior, had 110 tackles, two interceptions, four fumbles recovered and three kicks blocked.	6-3, 210	Henderson	Southern Vance
LATHAN, Luke OL Rated No. 52 offensive tackle nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ SuperPrep ranked No. 57 player in Florida ♦ Rated No. 78 player in Florida by BorderWars.com ♦ All-State ♦ All-District.	6-5, 295	Green Cove Springs, FL	Clay
LUCAS, Shane OL Had 50 tackles and eight sacks at Hargrave ♦ Runs 4.85 in the 40-yard dash ♦ Bench presses 420 pounds.	6-4, 280	Chatham, VA	Hargrave Military Acad.
MARTIN, II, James E. DE/LB Rivals.com ranked No. 19 defensive end nationally and No. 72 player in Florida ♦ Helped team to state championship ♦ As a senior, had 84 tackles, 22.5 sacks, 32 quarterback hurries and five fumbles caused ♦ Had 68 tackles, 19 quarterback sacks, three fumbles caused and one fumble recovered as a junior.	6-2, 223	Pompano Beach, FL	Ely
MORRIS, Derek OL Parade All-American in 2001 ♦ USA Today All-American ♦ Rated No. 4 offensive tackle nationally by Rivals.com ♦ TheInsiders.com ranked No. 32 prospect nationally coming out of high school ♦ Originally signed with Ohio, but has four years eligibility remaining ♦ Had 89 percent on blocking assignments as a senior.	6-6, 360	Huntersville	North Mecklenburg
OJO, Yami OL Rivals.com North Carolina Top 25, ranked No. 3 offensive lineman ♦ All-Conference as a junior.	6-4, 315	Raleigh	Southeast Raleigh
RUMPH, LeRue DB Rated No. 13 safety nationally and No. 29 player in Florida by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Ranked No. 54 player in Florida by SuperPrep ♦ Had 80 tackles, six interceptions and two fumbles recovered as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 25 receptions for 590 yards and four touchdowns.	6-2, 210	Clearwater, FL	Central Catholic
SCOTT, Miguel DB Rivals.com ranked No. 47 cornerback nationally ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Rated No. 51 player in Florida by SuperPrep ♦ As a senior, had 65 tackles, five passes broken up and three interceptions.	6-1, 180	Miami, FL	Killian
STONE, Marcus QB Parade All-American ♦ SuperPrep All-American ♦ PrepStar Dream Team, rated No. 9 quarterback nationally ♦ Gatorade Pennsylvania Player of the Year ♦ Ranked No. 3 dual-threat quarterback nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Had more than 5,100 career yards passing and 50 touchdowns.	6-4, 230	Harrisburg, PA	Bishop McDevitt
SUTTON, III, Jimmie WR PrepStar Dream Team, ranked No. 6 athlete nationally ♦ Rated No. 5 skill athlete nationally by SuperPrep ♦ Rivals.com ranked No. 15 player in Florida ♦ As a senior, had 35 receptions for 400 yards ♦ Returned three kickoffs for touchdowns and had 200 yards rushing ♦ Had four interceptions.	6-1, 170	Boca Raton, FL	Boca Raton
TULLOCH, Stephen LB Rated No. 28 inside linebacker nationally by Rivals.com ♦ SuperPrep ranked No. 37 player in Florida ♦ County Defensive Player of the Year ♦ Had 132 tackles, 12 sacks, two interceptions and five fumbles caused as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 132 tackles, 12 quarterback sacks and four fumbles caused.	5-10, 215	Miami, FL	Killian
TYLER, DeMarcus "Tank" DL Rivals.com ranked No. 38 defensive tackle nationally ♦ Rated No. 28 defensive tackle nationally by TheInsiders.com ♦ Region Player of the Year ♦ As a senior, had 67 tackles and nine quarterback sacks.	6-3, 301	Fayetteville	E.E. Smith
WILLIAMS, Mario DE Rated No. 9 defensive end nationally by Rivals.com ♦ All-State ♦ Had 87 tackles, including 22 tackles for loss, 13 quarterback sacks, five fumbles caused, two fumbles recovered and five kicks blocked as a senior.	6-6, 250	Richlands	Richlands

A LOOK AT THE WOLFPACK

RESULTS

(11-3, 5-3)

34	NEW MEXICO	14
34	EAST TENNESSEE STATE	0
65	at Navy	19
32	WAKE FOREST	13
51	at Texas Tech	48
56	MASSACHUSETTS	24
34	at North Carolina	17
24	DUKE	22
38	at Clemson	6
17	GEORGIA TECH	24
24	at Maryland	21
9	at Virginia	14
17	FLORIDA STATE	7
GATOR BOWL		
28	Notre Dame	6

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING						
NAME	ATT	COMP	YARDS	PCT	TD	INT
Rivers	418	262	3353	62.7	20	10
Davis	19	9	88	47.4	0	1
RUSHING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
McLendon	245	1101	4.5	65	18	
Brown	123	483	3.9	60	2	
Golden	60	265	4.4	26	3	
Rivers	57	100	1.8	10	10	
RECEIVING						
NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD	
Colchery	67	1192	17.8	72	7	
Peterson	42	559	13.3	88	6	
McLendon	42	354	8.4	25	0	
Hicks	37	510	13.8	53	2	
DEFENSIVE LEADERS						
Tackles: Burnette 136, Maddox 121, Thomas 103.						
Interceptions: Holt 3, Hudson 3, Burnette 2.						
Sacks: Burnette 9, Price 9, Anderson 6.						
Tackles for Loss: Burnette 17, Price 13.						

SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	WESTERN CAROLINA
Sept. 6	at Wake Forest
Sept. 13	at Ohio State
Sept. 20	TEXAS TECH
Sept. 27	NORTH CAROLINA
Oct. 4	at Georgia Tech
Oct. 11	CONNECTICUT
Oct. 18	CLEMSON
Oct. 25	at Duke
Nov. 1	VIRGINIA
Nov. 15	at Florida State
Nov. 22	MARYLAND



T.A. McLENDON SET A SCHOOL RECORD WITH 18 RUSHING TOUCHDOWNS IN 2002.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

of playing college football dreams of winning the Heisman."

A significant place in the Heisman race is more than a dream for Rivers, who enters his senior season with 8,993 passing yards, a 26-12 record as a starter and a chance to hold every significant career record for a quarterback in the ACC. That includes Heisman-winning quarterbacks Charlie Ward and Chris Weinke, who played for national-championship Florida State teams.

Now N.C. State, coached by a former FSU assistant head coach, could be headed to similar heights.

"I can sense it," Chapman said. "Everyone is jelling. We're coming together as a team. Nobody can stop us but us."

Most seasons, if the Wolfpack was as good as it thinks it is, that would just about be the case. Other than Florida State, the ACC hasn't always put the most competitive product on the field, at least not at the top of the conference standings. The 2003 season appears to be different, though, with Virginia and

Maryland also fielding teams that could make a run at the Top 10 ... along with Florida State, of course.

"The league will be so tough this year — so tough," Amato said. "Whoever wins the league ought to be one of the very best teams in the country."

With a victory Sept. 13 at Ohio State, the Wolfpack could make that claim.

"That won't be easy, but if we can win there," Rivers said, "we're on our way."

OFFENSE

With All-American candidates Philip Rivers and T.A. McLendon in the backfield and an abundance of speed and depth at receiver, N.C. State's offense seemingly has to answer only one question. It just happens to be the same question the Wolfpack faced last season: How will the offensive line hold up?

Last year the line produced a positive response, led by the play of tackle Chris Colmer. A year later, with two holes to fill, Amato is plugging in another former defensive lineman in one spot, a strategy that worked well last season with Sean Locklear and Shane Riggs getting the job done at guard after starting their careers on the defensive side. Riggs has graduated, but he will be replaced by another former defender, Ricky Fowler.

The other vacancy on the offensive line has been filled by freshman Derek Morris, a former prep All-American who originally signed with Ohio State but never suited up for the Buckeyes, giving him four years of eligibility beginning this season with N.C. State. At 6-foot-6, 350 pounds, Morris is the biggest lineman in Wolfpack history, and exceptionally agile for his size. As for confidence, when the Wolfpack announced his signing in January, Morris met the media by introducing himself as the team's starting left tackle. Turns out he was right.

"I'm not worried about our offensive line," Rivers said. "We've got some size and strength there, and a nice mixture of veterans and young guys. Believe me, we'll be fine."

If the line can create time for Rivers and holes for McLendon, watch out. Rivers threw for 3,353 yards last season and led the nation in passing efficiency for half the season. His top target, Jericho Cotchery, returns after catching 67 passes for 1,192 yards. Sterling Hicks is the only other returning receiver with more than 10 catches, but the team is so deep at receiver, thanks to newcomers Richard Washington, Tramain Hall and Lamart Bar-

rett, that Dovonte Edwards has taken his 26 catches to defense, where he will play cornerback.

Washington and Hall combined for 10 catches for 101 yards in the spring game.

Then there's McLendon, back for his sophomore season after running for 1,101 yards and 18 touchdowns — and catching 42 passes — in being named the ACC Rookie of the Year in 2002.

DEFENSE

The Wolfpack must replace its front four and the No. 2 tackler in school history, middle linebacker Dantonio Burnette. So why is Amato so confident when he discusses his defense? It's all about speed.

"Ideally you want experienced talent," Amato said. "But if you're giving me the choice of one or the other, I'll take talent over experience every time."

The 2003 Wolfpack defense will have talent, some of which hasn't been seen yet on a fall Saturday. That's the case with true freshman Mario Williams, who enrolled at N.C. State in January and emerged from the spring as one of the starting defensive ends. Williams was considered one of the top 10 recruits nationally, at any position.

"He's special," is about as far as Amato wants to go before Williams plays his first game.

The Wolfpack defense is also excited about redshirt freshman cornerback A.J. Davis, a national-caliber track athlete who missed last season with a broken leg, and sophomore outside linebacker Manny Lawson, one of the more unique athletes in college football.

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

QB Philip Rivers
Emerging Star

OLB Manny Lawson
Top Newcomer

WR Richard Washington

Despite being 6-5, 220 pounds, Lawson has a nearly 40-inch vertical, runs the 40-yard dash in 4.4 seconds, and qualified for the state track meet in four events. He blocked three punts last season, made nine tackles in just 21 plays against Notre Dame, and in the spring game emerged as the most disruptive member of the

NORTH CAROLINA STATE

WOLFPACK SPRING ROSTER

No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN	No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN
2	Podowitiz Alce	DB	Fr	5-11	167	Raleigh	91	Manny Lawson	LB	So	6-5	216	Goldboro
58	Brian Archis	OG	So	6-4	270	Bel Air, MD	85	William Lee	LS	So	6-2	205	Faquet-Vanina
31	Freddie Aughttry-Lindsay	LB	Jr	6-1	224	High Point	92	Sheldon Lewin	DT	So	6-4	270	Bronx, NY
13	Lamont Barrett	WR	Fr	6-1	190	Miami Springs, FL	53	Dyron Liverman	DE	Jr	6-3	230	Windsor
86	Andy Bertrand	WR	Jr	6-2	191	Miami, FL	54	Sean Locklear	OG	Sr	6-5	296	Lumberton
2	Darrell Blackman	RB	Fr	6-1	200	Williamsport, PA	88	Roddy Long	TE	Fr	6-6	225	Hickory
57	A.J. Booth	LB	Fr	6-2	210	Winston-Salem	56	Patrick Lowery	LB	Fr	6-2	228	Mocksville
33	Raymond Brooks	DE/LB	Fr	6-4	240	Williamsport, PA	65	Shane Lucas	OL	Fr	6-4	280	Angier
26	Josh Brown	TB	So	5-10	185	Shelby	41	Ronald Luce	LB	Jr	6-1	205	Sneads Ferry
41	Martrel Brown	LB	Fr	6-3	240	Pembroke	36	Andre Maddox	ROV	Jr	6-1	191	Miami, FL
11	Terrance Chapman	DE	Sr	6-3	250	Ft. Myers, FL	50	James Martin	DE/LB	Fr	6-2	223	Pompano Beach, FL
98	Maurice Charles	DE	Fr	6-3	225	Miami, FL	97	Justin Mercer	DE	Fr	5-8	203	Farmville
87	Brian Clark	WR	So	6-3	198	Tampa, FL	69	Michael McCall	OT	Sr	6-2	294	Charlotte
70	Chris Colmer	OT	Sr	6-6	305	Port Jefferson, NY	63	John McCargo	DT	Fr	6-2	286	Drake's
71	Antoine Calvin	OG	So	6-3	304	Baltimore, MD	77	John McKeon	OT	So	6-5	306	Raleigh
82	Jerricho Catchery	WR	Sr	6-1	200	Birmingham, AL	35	Rodney McKiever	FB	Fr	6-1	180	Liberty
99	Kennie Covington	DE	Jr	6-3	265	Laurinburg	44	T.A. McLendon	TB	So	5-11	215	Albemarle
65	Chris Crawford	DL	Fr	5-11	235	Jacksonville	74	Brandon Moore	OG	So	6-3	290	Charlotte
42	Chip Cross	DE	So	6-1	248	Conway	16	Chris Moore	QB	Fr	6-5	217	Alburtadale
3	A.J. Davis	QB	Fr	5-10	176	Durham	35	Jevon Moore	TB	Jr	5-9	188	Burlington, FL
10	Jay Davis	CB	So	6-2	198	Clearwater, FL	71	Derek Morris	OT	Fr	6-6	358	Huntersville
20	Reggie Davis	RB	Fr	6-2	220	Tallahassee, FL	96	Renaldo Moses	DE	So	6-6	210	Rockingham
46	Corrie Dawson	LB	Jr	6-3	230	Birmingham, AL	49	Chance Moyer	FB	Jr	6-3	238	Tuscaloosa, AL
32	Brian Dennison	RB	Fr	5-11	195	Jacksonville, FL	78	James Newby	OT	Fr	6-6	265	Asheville, NC
12	John Deraney	P/K	Fr	6-4	208	Fayetteville, GA	66	Yami Ojo	OL	Fr	6-4	305	Raleigh
38	Casey Dimeo	P	Sr	5-10	202	Burlington	53	Jed Paulsen	C	Jr	6-2	290	Columbia
25	Chris Dirito	PK	Fr	6-3	197	Durham	39	Roger Pollard	LB	Sr	6-0	216	Miami, FL
7	Easpinissa Eaton	DB	Fr	5-10	170	Goldboro	28	Joey Porter	WR	Fr	6-1	180	Reidsville
14	Dovonte Edwards	WR/CB	Jr	6-0	170	Chapel Hill	55	Andrew Purcell	LB	Sr	6-2	190	Garner
34	Michael Ellis	PK	So	6-1	175	Goldboro	84	Stephen Rayborn	FB	Fr	6-3	245	Union
1	Alex Fantroy	DE	Fr	5-8	165	Greensboro	28	Lamont Reid	CB	Jr	6-0	190	Concord, KY
3	Matt Felton	K	Fr	6-1	170	Battleboro	27	Robby Richter	P	Fr	6-4	198	Raleigh
76	Ricky Fowler	OG	Jr	6-2	287	Columbus, GA	15	John Ritcher	FB	So	6-3	248	Raleigh
89	Kennard France	WR	Sr	6-4	212	Mt. Airy	17	Philip Rivers	QB	Sr	6-5	236	Athens, AL
37	Avery Gibson	TE	Jr	6-2	242	Birmingham, AL	29	LeRue Rumph	DB	Fr	6-2	210	Clearwater, FL
2	Gregory Golden	CB	Jr	5-11	185	Fort Lauderdale, FL	61	Brandon Sanders	C	Sr	6-0	281	Garner, FL
33	Chauncey Graham	FB	Jr	5-10	217	Greensboro	25	Miguel Scott	DB	Fr	6-1	180	Miami, FL
27	Troy Graham	FS	Jr	6-3	193	Miami, FL	3	Sean Sigmon	QB	So	5-9	178	Claremont, FL
46	Jeffrey Graves	FB	Jr	5-9	228	Midway	47	Travis Singletary	LB	Fr	6-2	235	Cocanut Creek, FL
	Chad Green	DE	Fr	6-6	220	Rocky Mount	45	Jim Slattery	FB	Jr	6-1	220	Philadelphia, PA
21	Tramain Hall	TB/WR	So	5-11	183	Deerfield Bch, FL	63	Daniel Smoak	DL	So	6-2	270	Robbins
94	Alan Holloway	DT	Sr	6-2	285	Cliffwood Bch, NJ	7	Fred Span	WR	So	6-0	184	Bradenton
64	Leroy Harris	C	Fr	6-3	285	Raleigh	8	Victor Stephens	FS	Sr	6-0	172	Webster, FL
11	Chris Hawkins	QB	Fr	6-3	190	Henderson	9	Marcus Stone	QB	Fr	6-4	230	Harrisburg
19	Garland Heath	ROV	Fr	6-2	210	Belle Glade, FL	4	Jimmie Sutton, III	WR	Fr	6-1	170	Boca Raton, FL
75	Kalani Heppie	OL	Fr	6-4	270	Bealeton, VA	39	Eric Taylor	RB	Fr	5-9	195	Goldston
30	Austin Herbert	P/PK	Sr	6-0	207	Cary	52	Pat Thomas	LB	Jr	6-2	229	Miami, FL
62	Dwayne Herndon	DT	So	6-4	282	Middlesex	59	Matt Thompson	LS/OL	Fr	6-5	255	Charlotte
5	Sterling Hicks	WR	Jr	6-2	185	Pompano Beach, FL	34	Stephen Tulloch	LB	Fr	5-10	215	Miami, FL
24	Phillip Holloman	DB	Fr	5-11	185	Norfolk, VA	3	Monte Tunnell	WR	Fr	6-3	190	Hertford
73	Jon Holt	OT	Fr	6-6	280	Clearwater, FL	72	DeMarcus "Tank" Tyler	DT	Fr	6-3	308	Fayetteville
22	Oliver Hoyte	LB	So	6-3	230	Tampa, FL	67	Antonio Walker	DL	Fr	6-2	250	Nashville
1	Marcus Hudson	CB	Jr	6-2	183	Miami, FL	6	Richard Washington	WR	Fr	6-0	164	Ft. Myers, FL
84	Jamesly Jean	TE	Fr	6-5	220	Miami, FL	9	Mario Williams	DE	Fr	6-7	254	Richlands
45	Ernest Jones	LB	Fr	6-3	202	Henderson	80	T.J. Williams	TE	So	6-4	236	Torborro
4	J.J. Jones	ROV	So	6-0	185	Laurinburg	60	Ashley Wingate	OG	Jr	6-3	301	Torborro
21	Adam Kiker	PK	Sr	6-0	185	Wadesboro	57	Justin Worham	OT	Sr	6-5	300	Bulmer
35	Tucker King	K	Jr	6-1	195	Greensboro	13	Chris Young	QB	Jr	5-11	186	Raleigh
43	Brent LaPrad	ROV	Jr	5-11	170	Summerville, SC	83	Danny Young	SN	Sr	6-5	247	San Diego, CA
72	Luke Lathan	OL	Fr	6-5	295	Green Cove Springs, FL							

2003 PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB	Philip Rivers, Sr.*/Jay Davis, So.
TB	T.A. McLendon, So.*/Josh Brown, Jr.
WR	Jerricho Catchery, Sr.*/Brian Clark, So.
WR	Tramain Hall, So./Sterling Hicks, Jr.*
WR	Richard Washington, So./Andy Bertrand, Jr.
TE	John Ritcher, So./T.J. Williams, So.
LT	Chris Colmer, Sr.*/James Newby, Fr.
LG	Ricky Fowler, Jr./Leroy Harris, Fr.
C	Jed Paulsen, Jr.*/Brandon Sanders, Sr.
RG	Sean Locklear, Sr.*/Brandon Moore, So.
RT	Derek Morris, Fr./John McKeon, So.
PK	Adam Kiker, Sr.*/John Deraney, Fr.

DEFENSE

DE	Mario Williams, Fr./Renaldo Moses, So.
DT	DeMarcus Tyler, Fr./John McCargo, Fr.
DT	Alan Holloway, Sr./Dwayne Herndon, So.
DE	Terrance Chapman, Sr./Chip Cross, So.
OLB	Manny Lawson, So./Roger Pollard, Sr.*
MLB	Oliver Hoyte, So./Freddie Aughttry-Lindsay, Jr.
OLB	Pat Thomas, Jr.*/Freddie Aughttry-Lindsay, Jr.
CB	Greg Golden, Jr./A.J. Davis, Fr.
FS	Marcus Hudson, So.*/Troy Graham, Jr.
SS	Andre Maddox, Jr.*/J.J. Jones, So.
CB	Lamont Reid, Jr.*/Dovonte Edwards, Jr.
P	Austin Herbert, Sr.*/John Deraney, Fr.

NOTEBOOK

Former N.C. State coaches Dick Sheridan and Mike O'Cain used to tell university administrators that the football program needed to build more competitive facilities. When Chuck Amato interviewed for the head coaching job in December, 1999, he told athletic director Les Robinson the same thing.

This time, the university listened. After years of talk and planning, the 103,254 square-foot Wendell Murphy Football Center at Carter-Finley Stadium is now a reality.

"I feel bad for Coach O'Cain and Coach Sheridan because they had pictures and promises," Amato said. "I'm here and they're finally doing it. If I hadn't gotten that feeling of commitment, you wouldn't be talking to me right now. It was needed. It was one of the strongest things I talked to Les Robinson about when I was interviewing for this job. If you don't have it, there's no way we can compete with these teams."

• The Wolfpack made several coaching changes in the offseason after losing offensive coordinator/line coach Marty Galbraith and quarterbacks coach Mike Canales to the NFL.

Noel Mazzone, who spent 2002 as an assistant at Oregon State after working at Auburn and Ole Miss as offensive coordinator, was hired a few days before the spring game to be the Wolfpack's new offensive coordinator and tight ends coach. Former Tennessee assistant Michael Barry will coach N.C. State's offensive line, while Curt Cignetti shifted from tight ends coach to quarterbacks coach.

Junior Dovonte Edwards, who has 37 career receptions, says he'd like to play both ways this fall after being moved to cornerback in the spring. Freshman A.J. Davis, a natural cornerback, also wants to play both ways and expects to return kicks and block punts.

• By the time spring practice came to an end, Philip Rivers' backup at quarterback was sophomore Jay Davis. The quarterback of the future could be incoming freshman Marcus Stone, but the Wolfpack coaches are hoping Davis will remain the backup this season and allow Stone to redshirt. The coaches also hope to redshirt all three incoming tailbacks, and might have to use a receiver, most likely Tramain Hall, as an emergency tailback to make that happen.

— Gregg Doyel

NORTH CAROLINA STATE

Richard? Roy? Just Give Him the Ball

Meet Wolfpack receiver Richard Washington, who answers to Richard, but prefers to be called Roy. See, Richard, er, Roy Washington made his big goals known to coach Chuck Amato on the first day of spring practice when he walked into Amato's office and asked to be addressed as Roy from now on.

"It's short for 'Rookie Of the Year,'" Washington says with a mischievous, gold-toothed smile, referring to the annual ACC award that has gone to a Wolfpack player three times in the past four years. "That award's mine this year. And if it's not me it'll be (fellow sophomore receiver) Tramain Hall. He's Roy No. 2. One of us will win it, for sure."

Pretty big words for a sophomore who spent last season on the scout team. Of course, he also spent last season on the scout team terrorizing the first-team defense, a group that led the ACC in total defense in 2002.

"I'd look over there at the scout team, and Richard would be killing them," says sophomore tailback T.A. McLendon, who won ACC Rookie of

the Year last season, joining recent N.C. State winners Koren Robinson (1999) and Philip Rivers (2000). "He was one of the best athletes on the team last season, even if nobody outside the team knew it."

They'll find out this season. Washington, who wasn't academically eligible last season, will get plenty of snaps at receiver after tying for the team lead in the spring game with five catches. Even if he doesn't start, he will be on the field constantly in the Wolfpack's three-, four- and five-wideout formations.

Washington is especially looking forward to the Wolfpack's trip to Ohio State on Sept. 13. He originally gave the Buckeyes a verbal commitment before signing with N.C. State.

"Too cold up there," Washington says.

It will be freezing on Sept. 13. Well, the reception for Washington will be cold, anyway.

"That's the way I like it," Washington says. "A little booing will fire me up."

Whatever it takes, Richard ... er, Roy. □



WASHINGTON HOPES TO BE ANOTHER 'PACK ROOKIE OF THE YEAR.

PHOTO BY NC STATE MEDIA RELATIONS

N.C. State defense.

Other standouts include linebacker Pat Thomas, a junior who had 13 tackles against Notre Dame; cornerbacks Greg Golden and Lamont Reid, both former tailbacks; safety Andre Maddox; and cornerback Marcus Hudson, who could end up at safety this fall.

"Our defense is faster than it was last season, and I thought it was plenty fast last season," Rivers said. "You think you've got the corner on those guys, and then you don't. You think you can sneak a pass in there, and you can't. They can all run."

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Wolfpack returns both kickers and punters from last season, and they're both seniors, but that's not as good as it sounds because kicking and punting turned out to be real sore spots for N.C. State last year.

Amato has talked for three years about the strong leg of punter Austin Herbert, but Herbert has only shown glimpses of it.

A**FTER GOING 11-3 IN 2002, THE WOLFPACK ENTER 2003 RANKED SOMEWHERE NEAR THE TOP 10 WHILE DREAMING OF SOMETHING EVEN BIGGER.**

For every 50-yard spiral, there have been three or four 32-yard ducks. Herbert averaged 37.2 yards per punt last season, down from his solid sophomore average of 40.1 and all too similar to his freshman season (37.1). Herbert also struggles with hang time, as shown by his career total of seven fair catches in 173 punts.

"We've got to get better, and we will,"

Amato says.

The Wolfpack must do the same with field goals and extra points. Adam Kiker was a pleasant surprise in 2001 when he hit 13 of 14 field goal attempts, though none was longer than 41 yards. Last season, after he missed a number of games with a sore back, he was five for seven on field goals and 14 for 16 on extra points. In his absence, Herbert was five for nine on field goals and 38 for 43 on extra points. Not good.

"We're going to have some competition there this fall," Amato said. "I think you'll see a solid effort there."

In other words, look for redshirt freshman John Deraney to make a move. As a high school senior, Deraney converted all 21 extra-point attempts and all six field goals, with a long of 48. Deraney also made his only extra point attempt of the spring game, while Kiker bounced his off an upright.

— Gregg Doyel





VIRGINIA CAVALIERS

Moments after Virginia's stunning 48-13 pummeling of 18th-ranked Maryland in November, the Cavaliers' locker room was a feast of emotions. The team that had been predicted to finish eighth in the ACC had sur-

"This year, we're not going to sneak up on anybody. If we do, it's 'shame on them.'"

Armed with back-to-back nationally ranked recruiting classes, the coaching staff has restocked the Cavaliers' football fortunes with an array of blue-chip prospects. Groh, former coach of the NFL's

Cavs find another big-play, go-to receiver to replace record-breaking Billy McMullen; and will new offensive coordinator Ron Prince display the same magical play-calling touch as former NFL quarterback Bill Musgrave, who left Virginia to become the offensive coordinator with the

They're Raw, but Rising and Raucous

prisingly and undisputedly locked up second-place in the conference standings.

The scene was raucous as the players gathered in the middle of the room and began to sing unfamiliar lyrics to outsiders.

"We're ready for ya'll," they sang.

Right in the middle of the pack was Virginia coach Al Groh in his familiar gray sweatshirt, blue cap, bouncing up and down in sync with his players. Groh held the game ball up high, pumping it into the air, unable to contain a smile that stretched as wide as the Chesapeake Bay, which separates the two crusty old rivals.

Finally, the coach addressed the team and delivered not only a word of congratulations but also some inspiration for the future. His message may have contained a warning shot across the bow to the Cavaliers' conference opponents as well.

"Our goal every year is to win the Atlantic Coast Conference," said Groh. "After you win the ACC championship, you're in the tournament for the national championship. When we came here and said that two years ago, some people snickered ... but it looks like it's pretty realistic right now."

With 19 starters returning from last year's 9-5 team, which won nine of its last 12 games and upset four nationally ranked opponents along the way, no one is snickering any longer.

"We surprised some people last year," said senior quarterback Matt Schaub, the 2002 ACC Player of the Year.

New York Jets, showed he's not afraid to use true freshmen. The Cavs played 14 true freshmen last season, including 10 in the opener against Colorado State.

Virginia's offense, which averaged almost 28 points a game against a schedule that included seven ranked opponents, returns nearly intact. Nine starters are back, including Heisman Trophy-candidate Schaub, the entire backfield and all but one lineman.

The top four rushers return, led by Continental Tire Bowl MVP Wali Lundy, who produced one of the best freshman seasons in ACC history last year. Virginia's offensive line, mostly patchwork last season due to injuries, should be bigger, stronger, deeper and more experienced than a year ago.

Perhaps the only two question marks concerning Virginia's offense are: Can the

Jacksonville Jaguars?

Groh doesn't believe either concern will be an issue because he was careful to design an offense that would function the same no matter who called the plays. Plus, there are enough weapons of mass destruction in Virginia's arsenal to keep opposing defensive coordinators up at night.

"Fifty percent of the team is not going to change because one person left," said Groh about the coordinator's switch. "That seems to be bad math. We have a system the players are well-versed in and how we play is going to remain the same."

While McMullen set most of Virginia's receiving records, the Cavaliers still have plenty of players capable of catching passes. Virginia backs caught 120 passes

at a glance

CAVALIERS

2002: 9-5 overall; 6-2 ACC (T-2nd)

COACH: Al Groh — At Virginia: 14-12, 2 years; Overall: 49-59, 9 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 19; 9 offense, 8 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Matt Schaub, RB Wali Lundy, TE Heath Miller, WR-KR Marques Hagans, OLB Darryl Blackstock, ILB Kai Parham, ILB Ahmad Brooks, FS Willie Davis, DE Chris Canty

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: The backfield is loaded with the return of senior quarterback Matt Schaub and the Cavaliers' top four leading rushers. With an experienced offensive line and standout players returning at tight end and fullback, it will be dif-

ficult to slow this offense down.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: Only one player, sophomore Willie Davis, has game experience at the safety position. The defensive line returns intact, but needs to prove that it can stop the run.

OVERVIEW: The Cavaliers must take it up a couple of notches on defense. Virginia will field one of the most exciting offenses in the conference with playmakers at every skill position. As usual, Virginia's schedule is loaded with tough opponents, but an Oct. 18 showdown at home against defending ACC champ Florida State could be for the conference title.

**SOPHOMORE WALI LUNDY IS
A MULTI-PURPOSE THREAT FOR THE CAVALIERS.**

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

CAVALIERS RECRUITING

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
AUSBERRY, Marshal OL Rated No. 27 guard nationally and No. 65 player in Atlantic East Region by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ SuperPrep ranked No. 16 player in Virginia ♦ Rated No. 19 player in Virginia by Roanoke Times.	6-6, 318	Springfield	West Springfield
BILLY, Allen DL Rivals.com ranked No. 27 strongside defensive end nationally ♦ Rated No. 38 defensive lineman nationally and No. 10 player in Pennsylvania by SuperPrep ♦ PrepStar All-East Region ♦ Four-year starter on offense and defense ♦ As a senior, had 50 tackles, nine quarterback sacks, three fumbles caused and two fumbles recovered ♦ Had 12 receptions for 172 yards ♦ Averaged 38 yards per punt ♦ Member of basketball and track teams.	6-4, 255	New Castle, PA	New Castle
BROWN, Philip DB SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 12 defensive back nationally ♦ PrepStar Dream Team ♦ Ranked No. 9 player in Atlantic East Region and No. 1 player in Virginia by Rivals.com ♦ Rated No. 2 player in Virginia by Roanoke Times ♦ Helped team to two consecutive state championships ♦ Had seven interceptions, returning two for touchdowns, as a senior ♦ Returned six kickoffs for touchdowns.	5-11, 190	Hampton	Phoebus
BYERS, Emmanuel WR/DB Ranked No. 70 wide receiver nationally and No. 18 player in North Carolina by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ SuperPrep rated No. 16 player in North Carolina ♦ Four-year starter ♦ As a senior, had 35 receptions for 495 yards and six touchdowns ♦ Had 52 receptions for 800 yards and 10 touchdowns as a junior ♦ Had seven interceptions ♦ Returned three punts and one kickoff for touchdowns.	5-9, 175	High Point, NC	Lucy C. Ragsdale
CARTER, Keenan DL Had six quarterback sacks and two fumbles recovered at Fork Union ♦ Scored two touchdowns from fullback position ♦ PrepStar All-American ♦ Rated No. 18 player in Virginia by SuperPrep ♦ Had more than 300 career tackles and 38 quarterback sacks.	6-3, 325	Dumfries	Fork Union Military Acad.
CATTERTON, Robbie S Rivals.com ranked No. 27 safety nationally and No. 11 player in Virginia ♦ Rated No. 10 player in Virginia by SuperPrep ♦ All-District defensive back as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 115 tackles, 53 assists and six interceptions ♦ Member of baseball team.	6-2, 185	Virginia Beach	Floyd E. Kallam
CUNNINGHAM, Ian-Yates OL SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 6 offensive lineman nationally and No. 7 player in Texas ♦ Ranked No. 14 guard nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Dallas Morning News rated No. 35 player in Texas ♦ All-State ♦ All-District on offense and defense as a junior.	6-6, 309	Plano, TX	Hebron
DIAS, Jermaine LB PrepStar All-American ♦ SuperPrep All-American, ranked No. 74 player nationally ♦ Rated No. 9 linebacker nationally and No. 5 player in New Jersey by Rivals.com ♦ Two-time All-State ♦ Four-year starter.	6-3, 223	Hackensack, NJ	Hackensack
JOHNSON, Chris DL PrepStar honorable mention All-Atlantic Region ♦ Rated No. 24 player in Virginia by SuperPrep ♦ Roanoke Times ranked No. 22 player in Virginia ♦ District Defensive Player of the Year ♦ Had more than 10 sacks as a senior.	6-6, 265	Charlottesville	Charlottesville
LANE, Shannon WR/DB Ranked No. 17 wide receiver nationally by SuperPrep ♦ Rivals.com rated No. 38 wide receiver nationally ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ As a senior, had 53 receptions for 856 yards and seven touchdowns ♦ Had 40 tackles, five quarterback sacks and two interceptions ♦ Had seven interceptions as a junior.	6-1, 185	Virginia Beach	Salem
LIPSEY, Jordy C PrepStar Dream Team ♦ SuperPrep All-American, ranked No. 2 offensive lineman nationally ♦ Ranked No. 1 center and No. 68 player nationally by Rivals.com ♦ Orlando Sentinel ranked No. 7 player in Florida ♦ Graded 93.5 percent on career blocking assignments and had 143 pancake blocks.	6-3, 272	Longwood, FL	Lake Brantley

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
MCCABE, Kevin QB SuperPrep All-American, ranked No. 15 quarterback nationally ♦ PrepStar Dream Team ♦ Rated No. 5 pro-style quarterback nationally and No. 2 player in Pennsylvania by Rivals.com ♦ Completed 123 of 196 passes for 2,179 yards and 30 touchdowns as a senior ♦ Completed 288 of 523 career attempts for 4,347 yards and 51 touchdowns.	6-3, 192	Wexford, PA	Pine-Richland
MINES, Fontel WR Rivals.com rated No. 61 wide receiver nationally ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ Ranked No. 66 wide receiver nationally by SuperPrep ♦ Rated No. 15 player in Virginia by Roanoke Times ♦ As a senior, had 37 receptions for 674 yards and 10 touchdowns ♦ Had 29 receptions for 512 yards and 10 touchdowns with four interceptions as a junior.	6-5, 205	Richmond	Hermitage
PINIGIS, Eddie OL Ranked No. 63 offensive tackle nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ SuperPrep rated No. 21 player in Virginia ♦ Ranked No. 25 player in Virginia by Roanoke Times ♦ All-State.	6-7, 282	Forest	Jefferson Forest
PRENTICE, Danny FB/LB PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ Rated No. 40 player in Virginia by Rivals.com ♦ Washington Post All-Met linebacker ♦ Two-time All-Region ♦ Four-year starter ♦ Had 130 tackles, five quarterback sacks and one interception as a senior ♦ As a junior, had 452 yards rushing, averaging 7.5 yards per carry.	6-0, 228	Oakton	Oakton
REDD, Vince LB PrepStar All-American ♦ Ranked No. 13 strongside defensive end nationally and No. 2 player in Tennessee by Rivals.com ♦ Orlando Sentinel All-Southern ♦ All-State as a junior ♦ As a senior, had 104 tackles and scored seven touchdowns.	6-6, 243	Elizabethton, TN	Elizabethton
RICHARDSON, Marvin LB Rivals.com rated No. 55 outside linebacker nationally ♦ PrepStar All-East Region ♦ Ranked No. 33 player in New Jersey by SuperPrep ♦ As a junior, had more than 100 tackles and 10 quarterback sacks ♦ Member of basketball and track teams.	6-4, 219	East Orange, NJ	Bishop Francis
SAMMIS, Gordie OL Ranked No. 36 guard nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-East Region ♦ SuperPrep rated No. 19 player in New Jersey ♦ All-Area ♦ Had 60 pancake blocks as a senior.	6-4, 292	Flemington, NJ	Immaculata
STUPAR, Jonathan TE SuperPrep All-American, rated No. 3 tight end nationally and No. 2 player in Pennsylvania ♦ PrepStar Dream Team ♦ Ranked No. 6 tight end nationally and No. 4 player in Pennsylvania by Rivals.com ♦ As a senior, had 45 receptions for 515 yards and four touchdowns ♦ Had 75 tackles on defense ♦ Averaged scoring in double figures and led basketball team in rebounds as a junior.	6-5, 246	State College, PA	State College Area
TERRY, James RB/LB Ranked No. 38 running back nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Atlantic Region ♦ Rated No. 17 player in Virginia by SuperPrep ♦ Roanoke Times ranked No. 11 player in Virginia ♦ Second-team All-State ♦ As a junior, had more than 700 yards rushing and 10 touchdowns, despite missing four games.	6-2, 215	Stafford	Woodbridge
WILLIAMS, Deyon WR SuperPrep rated No. 13 player in Mid-Atlantic Region ♦ Ranked No. 15 player in Maryland by Rivals.com ♦ Washington Post All-Met ♦ Had 35 receptions for 689 yards and seven touchdowns as a senior ♦ Also scored touchdowns on a punt return and an interception ♦ State champion in 300-meter hurdles.	6-3, 185	Upper Marlboro, MD	Suitland

A LOOK AT THE CAVALIERS

RESULTS

(9-5, 6-2)

29	COLORADO STATE	35
19	at Florida State	40
34	SOUTH CAROLINA	21
48	AKRON	29
38	at Wake Forest	34
27	at Duke	22
22	CLEMSON	17
37	NORTH CAROLINA	27
15	at Georgia Tech	23
14	at Penn State	35
14	NORTH CAROLINA STATE	9
48	MARYLAND	13
9	at Virginia Tech	21
	CONTINENTAL TIRE BOWL	
48	West Virginia	22

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	ATT	COMP	YARDS	PCT	TD	INT
Schaub	418	288	2976	68.9	28	7
Hagans	25	14	143	56.0	1	1

RUSHING

NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD
Lundy	196	826	4.2	31	6
Pearman	83	343	4.1	62	4
Weeks	41	210	5.1	32	0
Johnson	26	133	5.1	19	1

RECEIVING

NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD
McMullen	69	894	13.0	59	3
Lundy	58	435	7.5	48	4
Miller	33	327	9.9	42	9
Shelling	31	314	10.1	30	4

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Tackles: Crowell 155, Robertson 122, Evans 116.
Interceptions: Curry 2, Davis 2.
Sacks: Blackstock 10, Robertson 5.
Tackles for Loss: Blackstock 14, Robertson 9.

SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	DUKE
Sept. 6	at South Carolina
Sept. 13	at Western Michigan
Sept. 27	WAKE FOREST
Oct. 4	at North Carolina
Oct. 11	at Clemson
Oct. 18	FLORIDA STATE
Oct. 25	TROY STATE
Nov. 1	at North Carolina State
Nov. 13	at Maryland (Thur.)
Nov. 22	GEORGIA TECH
Nov. 29	VIRGINIA TECH

last season and tight ends combined for another 46 and 13 touchdowns. All of those players return.

"Our offense and all the weapons we have is like a quarterback's dream," Schaub said. "A lot of teams have one or two guys that they can go to, but we have five or six or more."

Things are also looking up for defensive coordinator Al Golden's unit, which returns eight starters and several experienced backups everywhere but the safety spots. Six of the top seven linemen return in Virginia's 3-4 scheme, but the real thrill will come at the linebacker positions.

The 3-4 is designed to be a linebacker's defense and Virginia brings a plethora of talent to those spots, including sophomore outside linebacker Darryl Blackstock, who burst onto the national scene last year by leading the nation's freshmen with 10 sacks and 14 tackles for loss.

Virginia fans are equally excited about two freshmen rookie linebackers, the inside duo of Ahmad Brooks and Kai Parham. Both high school All-Americans signed with Virginia last year, but Brooks spent the year improving his academic status at Hargrave Military Academy, while Parham redshirted due to back problems that have since cleared up.

Last year, Groh never accepted the predicted fate of next-to-last in the ACC and instilled a sense of urgency in everyone in the program — players and coaches — to raise their performance level. This season, Groh insists that effort must reach yet another level if the program is to move forward.

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

QB Matt Schaub

Emerging Star

OLB Darryl Blackstock

Top Newcomers

LB Kai Parham and

LB Ahmad Brooks

OFFENSE

Matt Schaub rewrote the Virginia single-season passing record book by blossoming into a leader on the field last season. Both qualities were important because the Cavaliers' running game finished next-to-last in the ACC and Schaub

directed an offense that started five freshmen and two sophomores.

He led the ACC and finished sixth in the nation in passing efficiency, and ranked second in the nation in completion percentage (68.9). More importantly, he spread the wealth among 15 receivers and threw his conference-leading 28 TD passes to nine different players.

"This year, we have four or five wide receivers who can make plays for us and two or three tight ends who have proven themselves and a stable of running backs," Schaub said. "So defenses can pick their poison."

Lundy leads that stable after becoming the first freshman in ACC history to rank in the conference top 10 in both rushing (sixth, with 826 yards) and receiving (seventh, with 58 catches for 435 yards). He also finished third in the conference in kickoff returns, and his 1,670 all-purpose yards were the most in the nation by a freshman and set an ACC freshman record.

He is backed up at tailback by junior Alvin Pearman, who was second on the team in rushing even those he missed the final five games with a knee injury. Pearman also caught 21 passes.

Junior Marquis Weeks had an outstanding spring after leading all Virginia backs last season with 5.1 yards per carry, and Cav fans have yet to see the real Michael Johnson, a sophomore speedster who has been hobbled by injuries.

Senior Michael McGrew leads a talented group of receivers who became more effective as the season progressed. McGrew was Virginia's second-leading receiver in 2002 and owns more starts (24) than any other player on the roster. Junior Ottawa Anderson and senior Ryan Sawyer came on strong, but athletic sophomore Marques Hagans, who played backup quarterback, running back, wide receiver and punt returner, will add depth to the position and could be a big playmaker.

Both tight ends, sophomore Heath Miller and junior Patrick Estes, bulked up in the offseason and could be key targets in Virginia's passing game. Miller, a converted quarterback, shocked defenses last season when he set an ACC record with nine TD catches. He also led all ACC tight ends with 33 receptions. Estes, who caught four TDs, emerged as the team's most improved offensive player in the spring.

Last year's young offensive line took some tough hits when injuries depleted what little experience it had, but most of the starters and some backups return.



LINEBACKER DARRYL BLACKSTOCK LED THE NATION'S FRESHMEN IN SACKS AND TACKLES FOR LOSS IN 2002.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

Leading the way is senior Kevin Bailey, one of the top linemen in the conference last year until his season ended after a knee injury in the second game. Elton Brown, a 6-6, 333-pound junior, anchors the right side, while athletic D'Brickshaw Ferguson is back at left tackle, where he impressed coaches last season by starting all 14 games as a true freshman.

DEFENSE

If the Cavaliers can perform on defense like they did in the final month of the 2002 season, they could make a strong run for the ACC championship. Down the home stretch a year ago, they shut down three of the nation's most potent offenses, holding N.C. State to nine points, Maryland to 13 and West Virginia to 22 in a 26-point rout of the Mountaineers in the Continental Tire Bowl.

Leading the way is Darryl Blackstock, who earned national Defensive Freshman of the Year accolades from one publication. He arrived at Virginia with his sights set on breaking former Cav Chris Slade's ACC record of 40 career sacks. He recorded his first 10 as a freshman, but now he wants more than just sacks.

"My goal is to play more physical," said Blackstock, who has added 14 pounds of muscle to his 6-4, 236-pound

CAVALIERS SPRING ROSTER

No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN	No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN
83	Ottawa Anderson	WR	Jr	6-0	186	Norfolk	85	Brandon Lee	WR	Fr	5-10	183	Williamsburg
65	Kevin Bailey	C	Sr	6-6	293	Lexington, KY	84	Robert Luck	WR	Sr	5-11	174	Charlottesville
62	Brian Barthelmes	G	So	6-7	286	Garrettsville, OH	33	Wali Lundy	TB	So	6-1	212	Willingboro, NJ
53	Rich Bedesem	LB	Jr	6-2	232	Holland, PA	86	Kase Luzar	FB	Sr	6-2	236	Williamsburg
91	D.J. Bell	DE	Fr	6-4	306	Camden, DE	47	Raymond Mann	LB	Sr	6-1	233	Hampton
56	Darryl Blackstock	LB	So	6-4	230	Newport News	96	Justin Markey	TE	So	6-4	236	Montpelier
34	Ahmad Brooks	LB	Fr	6-2	249	Woodbridge	4	Anthony Martinez	QB	Fr	6-3	249	Montpelier
61	Elton Brown	G	Jr	6-6	333	Hampton	54	Melvin Massey	NT	So	6-2	262	Newport News
69	Brad Butler	T	So	6-8	274	Lynchburg	80	Michael McGrew	WR	Sr	6-2	200	Birmingham, AL
93	Braden Campbell	DE	So	6-5	278	Slippery Rock, PA	89	Heath Miller	TE	So	6-5	254	Swards Creek
95	Chris Canty	DE	Jr	6-7	280	Charlotte, NC	51	Mark Miller	LB	So	6-0	214	Birmingham, AL
71	Ryan Childress	LS	Sr	5-11	209	Shawsville	1	Ron Morton	WR	Fr	6-1	176	Hamilton, NJ
46	Miles Clements	LB	Fr	5-11	235	New Orleans, LA	31	Stefan Orange	CB	Fr	6-2	184	Culpeper
22	Almondo Curry	CB	Sr	5-8	175	Hampton	44	Kai Parham	LB	Fr	6-3	238	Virginia Beach
64	Ron Darden	G	Fr	6-4	309	Pasadena, MD	21	Alvin Pearman	TB	Jr	5-10	198	Charlotte, NC
40	Willie Davis	S	So	6-2	185	Wilmington, NC	93	Adam Rhodes	LB	So	6-2	235	Harrisonburg
16	David de Laurial	QB	Jr	6-3	205	New Orleans, LA	14	Andy Rippean	PK	So	5-10	172	Howerton
26	Kevin Dixon	CB	Jr	5-10	170	Danville, IL	74	Davon Robb	T	Fr	6-8	259	Hopewell
15	Jay Doye	S	Jr	6-2	191	Jacksonville, FL	98	Kwakou Robinson	DE	So	6-4	327	Brooklyn, NY
82	Imhotep Durham	WR	So	5-11	168	Brooklyn, NY	17	Scott Robinson	WR	So	6-1	173	Neshanic Station, NJ
81	Isaiah Ekejiuba	WR	Jr	6-4	216	Chestnut Ridge, NY	92	Nick Sauer	LB	Jr	6-2	180	Earlsville
87	Patrick Estes	TE	Jr	6-7	262	Richmond	37	Ryan Sawyer	WR	Sr	6-2	209	Marietta, GA
42	Lance Evans	S	Fr	6-4	200	Voorhees, NJ	7	Matt Schaub	QB	Sr	6-5	240	West Chester, PA
70	Mark Farrington	G/C	Jr	6-2	280	Spring, TX	96	Brennan Schmidt	DE	So	6-3	269	Arlington
66	D'Brickshaw Ferguson	T	So	6-5	265	Freeport, NY	13	Billy Schweitzer	QB	Jr	6-3	206	Alexandria
23	Tony Franklin	TB	Fr	5-11	186	Cleveland, OH	57	Phillip Sims	C	Fr	6-2	248	Forest
18	Marques Hagans	QB	So	5-10	207	Hampton	9	Bryan Smith	PK	Jr	5-10	163	Hampton
10	Tom Hagan	P	So	6-2	176	Roanoke	8	Kurt Smith	PK	So	6-1	181	Lookout Mountain, GA
4	David Hale	CB	So	5-7	175	Pulaski	38	Jason Snelling	FB	So	6-1	228	Chester
45	Dennis Haley	LB	Jr	6-1	241	Salem	90	Matt Stone	DE	So	6-5	261	Boca Raton, FL
49	Alex Hall	LB	So	5-11	227	Corpus Christi, TX	25	Art Thomas	CB	Sr	6-2	205	Mechanicsville, PA
3	Marcus Hamilton	CB	Fr	6-0	187	Centerville	58	Jon Thompson	LB	Jr	6-1	219	Wise
36	Jermaine Hardy	CB	Jr	5-11	208	Roanoke	39	Marshall Tucker	CB	Fr	5-11	197	Richmond
41	Marcus Hardy	TE	Jr	6-3	240	Blackstone	28	Kenneth Tynes	WR	Fr	6-0	191	Clifton
60	Andrew Hoffman	NT	Jr	6-5	285	South Riding	27	Coan Ward	FB	Fr	6-0	200	Pearisburg
76	Tom Howell	T	Jr	6-4	286	Sarasota, FL	5	Marquis Weeks	TB	Jr	5-11	210	Berwyn, PA
6	Connor Hughes	PK	So	6-0	178	Williamsburg	59	Bryan White	LB	Jr	6-2	227	Knoxville, TN
32	Brandon Isaiah	FB	Jr	6-0	227	Winston-Salem, NC	67	Wesley Wilson	C	So	6-4	286	Hawken School
2	Michael Johnson	TB	So	5-10	190	Newport News	29	Jamaine Winborne	CB	Sr	5-10	202	Chesapeake
26	Rodney Johnson	FB	Sr	5-11	195	Hampton	65	Jason Wright	LB	Fr	6-3	187	Chantilly
43	Randy Jones	CB	Fr	5-10	182	Rockingham, NC	75	Zac Yarbrough	C	Jr	6-4	275	Winter Park, FL
							99	Greg Zimpel	LB	Fr	6-1	236	Chesapeake

2003 PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB	Matt Schaub, Sr.*/Anthony Martinez, Fr.
RB	Wali Lundy, So.*/Marquis Weeks, Jr.
FB	Kase Luzar, Sr.*/Jason Snelling, So.
FL	Ryan Sawyer, Sr.*/Marques Hagans, So.
SE	Michael McGrew, Sr.*/Ottawa Anderson, Jr.
TE	Heath Miller, So.*/Patrick Estes, Jr.
LT	D'Brickshaw Ferguson, So.*/Davon Robb, Fr.
LG	Brian Barthelmes, So.*/Ron Darden, Fr.
C	Kevin Bailey, Sr.*/Zac Yarbrough, So.
RG	Elton Brown, Jr.*/Mark Farrington, Jr.
RT	Brad Butler, So.*/Tom Howell, Jr.
PK	Connor Hughes, So.*/Kurt Smith, So.

DEFENSE

DE	Chris Canty, Jr.*/Kwakou Robinson, So.
NT	Andrew Hoffman, Jr.*/Melvin Massey, So.
DE	Brennan Schmidt, So.*/Braden Campbell, So.
OLB	Darryl Blackstock, So.*/Jon Thompson, Jr.
ILB	Rich Bedesem, Jr.*/Kai Parham, Fr.
ILB	Bryan White, Jr.*/Ahmad Brooks, Fr.
OLB	Raymond Mann, Sr.*/Dennis Haley, Jr.
CB	Almondo Curry, Sr.*/Marcus Hamilton, Fr.
CB	Jamaine Winborne, Sr.*/Art Thomas, Sr.
SS	Jermaine Hardy, Jr.*/Lance Evans, Fr.
FS	Jay Dorsey, Jr.*/Willie Davis, So.
P	Tom Hagan, So.*/Connor Hughes, So.

NOTEBOOK

When freshman linebacker Ahmad Brooks became the first player to enter Virginia at the semester break in at least 20 years last January, Cavalier fans were relieved.

Brooks, a high school All-American as a senior in 2000, signed with Virginia in 2001 but needed time in prep school to make his test scores. Brooks earned the necessary scores during the fall semester at Hargrave Military Academy, but was still pursued by several schools that hoped he might renege on his commitment to the Cavaliers. Entering school early was a bonus to Brooks and to the Cavs.

"If I had come here this August, then I would have had only three weeks to learn the defense and everything else before the Duke game," said Brooks. "Coming in early helped me not only learn the defense, but also participate in winter workouts and get to know my teammates and get acclimated to the school."

• Al Groh promoted offensive line coach Ron Prince to offensive coordinator after Bill Musgrave left Virginia to take the same position with the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars. Prince will also remain the line coach, but Groh won't decide until August whether he or Prince will call the plays.

"For the last two years, we've had a very good line coach," said Groh. "It's important that we continue to have a very good line coach, so that's a priority."

If Groh decides to take over play-calling responsibility, he will remain on the sidelines on game days.

• Among other staff changes, wide receiver coach Mike Groh, the head coach's son, will also coach quarterbacks. Former graduate assistant Andy Heck will coach Virginia's tight ends, and former Cavalier All-American safety Anthony Poindexter will take Heck's graduate assistant position and help coach wide receivers.

• So, who's the fastest Cavalier? No one really knows because Virginia doesn't publicize players' 40-yard dash times.

However, sophomore safety Willie Davis, considered one of the fastest on the team, said there would be no contest if he were to race sophomore tailback Michael Johnson, a former high school track All-American who has been hobbled by injuries ever since he joined the team.

— Jerry Ratcliffe

VIRGINIA

Schaub Won't Sneak Up on Anyone

Matt Schaub says he can do better than last season when he went from benchwarmer to Heisman Trophy candidate at warp speed.

After getting off to a rocky start in the Cavaliers' season-opening loss to Colorado State in 2002, Schaub was benched for the Florida State game the following week. But he stormed back to regain his starting job and he's owned it ever since.

From that point onward, Schaub broke or tied 10 Virginia single-season records and led the Cavaliers to nine wins in their last 12 games, including upsets of four nationally-ranked opponents. Along the way, he finished second nationally in pass completion percentage (68.9) as he threw for 2,976 yards, 28 touchdowns and only seven interceptions.

As a result, he beat out heralded N.C. State quarterback Philip Rivers for ACC Player of the Year honors.

"Losing my starting job for one game ate at me, but in a positive way," Schaub said. "It ate at me in a way that made me want to work that much harder, prepare that much better and to concentrate on things that I had done poorly in the opener and correct them."

Schaub was simply amazing the remainder of the season. He completed

at least 70 percent of his passes in eight games, including better than 80 percent in two contests.

"I can't think of another quarterback in the country who meant more to his team last season than Matt Schaub," said Virginia coach Al Groh. "Our team couldn't have had the season we had without him."

Groomed by former NFL quarterback Bill Musgrave (who has since become offensive coordinator of the Jacksonville Jaguars), Schaub's 4-to-1 touchdown to interception ratio was only one example of how efficient he became as a passer.

"I was a little surprised because I thought it would be even better," Schaub said. "Some of the interceptions were tipped balls, so a few of them shouldn't have ever happened."

Groh has stressed to Schaub that he must now prepare for defenses to throw more looks at him in order to negate his sharp passing ability, but Schaub welcomes the challenge.

"It's going to take more preparation, but that's the price you have to pay to win games," said Schaub. "We surprised some people last year. This year we're not going to sneak up on anybody. If we do, it's 'shame on them.'" □



SCHAUB LED THE CAVS TO SEVERAL UPSET WINS LAST SEASON.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

frame. "Everybody sees me as a speed rusher, but I want to be able to run people over and make big hits."

Blackstock and senior Raymond Mann anchor the outside, Rich Bedesem and Bryan White will do what they can to beat out Kai Parham and Ahmad Brooks for the inside linebacker spots.

"Brooks is a freak of nature," said Hargrave Military coach Robert Prunty. "I have never seen anyone with his size (6-4, 245) move that fast."

Up front, junior end Chris Canty led all conference linemen in tackles last year, while sophomore end Brennan Schmidt set a Virginia freshman record for linemen with 87 tackles. Andrew Hoffman returns at nose tackle.

The secondary struggled until it pulled together in the final month of the 2002 season. Starting corners Almondo "Muffin" Curry and Jamaine Winborne return



**VIRGINIA'S
OFFENSIVE LINE,
MOSTLY**

**PATCHWORK LAST SEASON
DUE TO INJURIES, SHOULD BE
BIGGER, STRONGER, DEEPER
AND MORE EXPERIENCED
THAN A YEAR AGO.**

along with alternate Art Thomas. Safety is the question mark because sophomore Willie Davis is the only returning player with any significant experience. Junior safeties Jermaine Hardy and Jay Dorsey had good springs and could be ready to make a difference.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Sophomore Connor Hughes replaced starting kicker Kurt Smith the final month of last season and responded with a 47-yard field goal in his first try against Maryland. Hughes missed only one of six attempts and made 16 of 17 extra points to solidify his grip on the job. Smith returns to compete for the job and will most likely handle kickoff duty after putting 39 of 78 into the end zone, resulting in 19 touchbacks.

Punter Tom Hagan started all 14 games as a freshman and his 36.7-yard average makes him the second-leading returning punter in the conference.

Virginia's return responsibilities are in good hands with the versatile Marques Hagens handling punts (he returned one 69 yards for a key TD in the bowl game) and Wali Lundy, Marquis Weeks (100 yard return vs. UNC) and others returning kickoffs.

— Jerry Ratcliffe



WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS

There might not be a group of college athletes in the nation that relishes proving people wrong more than the football players who play for Wake Forest.

And there might be no group of college athletes in the nation with more

sophomores everywhere, a rebuilt-defensive line. I can see why they're saying we're going to drop.

"But that's the same thing every year. That's why we like playing here. That's what drives us."

The Deacons, in 2003, will get an

for us last year, but we've got some good young players coming.

"We've never felt like we've arrived. For two years now, we know we're still building a football program. We're going to be young, but we're going to be talented and we're going to have some guys who want to play."

Just Another Chance to Exceed Expectations

opportunities to do just that.

Wake Forest football players hear it throughout their careers, how the university is too small, too academically oriented, too economically upscale and too lacking in tradition to compete against the larger, less stringent, more diverse and more historically successful schools that populate the Atlantic Coast Conference.

And even after back-to-back winning seasons under coach Jim Grobe, the Deacons are again hearing how bleak things will be in 2003. The entire starting defensive line is gone, the offense lost eight starters, and the Deacons will be younger than they've been in Grobe's first two seasons of 6-5 and 7-6.

"You can't fault them really," junior receiver Jason Anderson said of those who predict a losing record for the Deacons. "They see a group of young boys, a sophomore quarterback, freshmen and

opportunity to do what no Wake Forest football team has accomplished in more than 50 years. Wake Forest hasn't earned three consecutive winning seasons since 1950-52, before the formation of the ACC. In fact, the Deacons managed to string two winning seasons together just three times during that span.

For Grobe to do what previous Wake Forest coaches such as John Mackovic, Al Groh and Bill Dooley could not, he'll need immediate contributions from unproven players. Of the 44 players listed as first or second team at the completion of spring practice, 13 are sophomores and 10 are redshirt freshmen.

"We're going to play a lot younger players," Grobe said. "That's going to be the big change. I'm really excited about our young guys, though. I think we're going to have a good football team. We're going to miss some good linemen and some guys who were impact players

Three seasons after Wake Forest finally fired Jim Caldwell for winning just 26 games in eight seasons, Grobe is relying more and more on the players he and his staff recruited. For instance:

- Sophomore Cory Randolph, who last season completed 24 of 48 passes for 333 yards while sharing the job with James MacPherson, will start at quarterback.

- Sophomore Chris Barclay, who gained 703 yards on 144 carries, is expected to be the featured back in the Deacons' ground-oriented offense.

- Four sophomores are among the six players listed as first or second team on a defensive line that lost all three starters — Calvin Pace, Montique Sharpe and Rod Stephen.

"It's real typical to be critical of the old coach," Grobe said. "But the fact of the matter is, when we got here, we found some really nice kids.

"And we found some nice older players, guys like Nate Bolling, Michael Collins, Ovie Mughelli and Calvin Pace that were more than good players — they were great kids. In some cases, they really weren't great, great players, but they were good players. And being great kids gave them a chance to win.

"So we'll miss those guys. I think we have the same kind of kid. We just don't have maturity."

The Deacons won 13 games the past two years with a scrappy, if unconventional 3-3-5 defense and a resourceful ball-control offense that led the ACC in rushing both

at a glance

DEMON DEACONS

2002: 7-6 overall; 3-5 ACC (7th)

COACH: Jim Grobe — At Wake Forest:

13-11, 2 years; Overall: 46-44-1, 8 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 12; 3 offense, 7 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: WR Jason Anderson, TB Chris Barclay, OG Tyson Clabo, FS Quintin Williams, CB Eric King, LB Brad White, LB Kellen Brantley

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: Experienced linebackers and defensive backs. Proven offensive playmakers in Barclay and

Anderson. Solid kicking game.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: Absence of experience in the defensive line, lack of seasoned depth at most positions and an unproven quarterback.

OVERVIEW: This season might be Grobe's biggest challenge since he arrived at Wake Forest. Grobe and his staff continue to build a better program with players they recruited, but the Deacons appear to be at least a year away from finishing in the top half of the ACC standings.



DEMON DEAGONS RECRUITING

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
ABBATE , Jonathan LB	5-10, 240	Powder Springs, GA	Harrison
PrepStar All-Region ♦ County Defensive Player of the Year ♦ As a senior, had 199 tackles, averaging more than 15 tackles per game ♦ Had 25 tackles for loss and 10 quarterback sacks.			
ANDREWS , Micah TB	5-10, 190	Duluth, GA	Greater Atlanta Christian
Rated No. 26 running back nationally by Rivals.com ♦ SuperPrep ranked No. 19 player in Georgia ♦ All-State ♦ Had 6,429 career yards rushing and 67 touchdowns ♦ Had 2,871 yards rushing, averaging 8.4 yards per carry, and scored 25 touchdowns as a senior ♦ His 2002 rushing yardage ranks third highest in Georgia high school football history ♦ As a junior, had 1,784 yards and 28 touchdowns.			
BLAKE , Devin CB	5-11, 170	Jacksonville, FL	First Coast
All-State ♦ All-District ♦ Team MVP ♦ Three-year starter ♦ Team captain ♦ Member of track team.			
BRIM , Matt OL	6-6, 300	Belews Creek	Carver
PrepStar All-Region ♦ Rivals.com rated No. 17 player in North Carolina ♦ Ranked No. 16 player in North Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ Team co-captain ♦ Helped team to state championship.			
BRYANT , D'Angelo DB	6-2, 215	New Ellenton, SC	Silver Bluff
PrepStar All-Region ♦ Ranked No. 17 player in South Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ Rivals.com rated No. 20 player in South Carolina ♦ All-State ♦ Four-year starter ♦ Helped team to two state titles ♦ Played CB in junior and senior seasons ♦ Had 1,930 yards passing and 26 TDs, and 16 rushing scores, during those two seasons.			
EDWARDS , Johnny CB	5-11, 180	Fayetteville, GA	Starrs Mill
PrepStar All-Region ♦ SuperPrep rated No. 31 player in Georgia ♦ Ranked No. 47 player in Georgia by Rivals.com ♦ As a senior, had 35 tackles and two interceptions ♦ Had 60 tackles and six interceptions as a junior.			
FRAZIER , Louis OL	6-4, 300	Clearwater, FL	Clearwater
All-County ♦ All-Conference ♦ Coaches Association All-District as a senior.			
HALL , Bruce QB	6-0, 185	Milton, FL	Milton
Rivals.com ranked No. 29 dual-threat quarterback nationally ♦ All-State ♦ Completed 357 of 650 career passes attempted for 5,646 yards and 34 touchdowns ♦ Had 2,534 career yards rushing and 31 touchdowns ♦ Had 2,561 yards passing and 28 touchdowns as a senior ♦ Had 1,303 yards rushing and 16 touchdowns.			
JONES , Jeromy DL	6-2, 265	Marietta, GA	Wheeler
Rated No. 40 player in Georgia by SuperPrep ♦ All-State ♦ As a senior, had 85 tackles, including 11 tackles for loss, six quarterback sacks and two blocked punts ♦ Had 71 tackles and seven sacks as a junior.			
JUSTICE , Steve OL	6-4, 275	Port Orange, FL	New Smyrna Beach
Rivals.com ranked No. 42 offensive guard nationally ♦ Two-time All-State ♦ District Player of the Year in 2002 ♦ Three-year starter ♦ Played offense and defense ♦ Graded 91 percent on blocking assignments as a senior ♦ Had 54 tackles, including 10 tackles for loss, and two quarterback sacks.			
LOWE , Delon WR	6-4, 190	Fayetteville	E.E. Smith
PrepStar honorable mention All-Region ♦ Rated No. 25 player in North Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ All-Conference ♦ All-Area ♦ As a senior, had 46 receptions for 784 yards and eight touchdowns.			
MARION , Kevin WR	5-9, 150	St. Petersburg, FL	Dixie Hollins
PrepStar honorable mention All-Region ♦ Played only one season of high school football ♦ Runs 4.3 in the 40-yard dash ♦ Set Florida high school record in long jump.			

NAME / POSITION	SIZE	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL / COLLEGE
MASON , Aaron WR	5-10, 185	Lexington, KY	Paul Lawrence Dunbar
Had 3,944 career all-purpose yards ♦ Had 1,357 career rushing yards and 16 touchdowns ♦ Had 1,674 career receiving yards and eight TDs ♦ Had 99 career tackles and set school record with 12 career interceptions.			
MAUK , Ben GB	6-1, 195	Kenton, OH	Kenton
PrepStar All-Region ♦ Ranked No. 36 player in Ohio by Rivals.com ♦ Gatorade Ohio Player of the Year ♦ Ohio Mr. Football ♦ Led team to two consecutive state championships ♦ As a senior, set national records with 6,540 yards passing and 76 touchdowns ♦ Set national career records with completions (1,105), attempts (1,931), and yards (17,534), and is second with 179 career passing touchdowns.			
MCKENZIE , Aaron OL	6-2, 290	Lakeland, FL	George Jenkins
All-County ♦ All-District ♦ Led team in tackles ♦ Also played offensive line ♦ Runs 4.9 in the 40-yard dash.			
MOORE , Kenneth CB	5-11, 170	Charlotte	Butler
Rivals.com rated No. 22 player in North Carolina ♦ Ranked No. 23 player in North Carolina by SuperPrep ♦ All-State ♦ Had 2,639 career yards rushing, 1,907 career yards receiving and 1,571 career return yards.			
OVERSTREET , Brodie OL	6-6, 275	Danville, KY	Boyle County
SuperPrep All-American, ranked No. 4 player in Kentucky ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ Rated No. 80 offensive tackle nationally and No. 6 player in Kentucky ♦ Two-time All-State ♦ As a senior, had 48 tackles, including eight tackles for loss, four sacks, two fumbles caused and one kick blocked.			
ROBINSON , Matthew DE	6-2, 225	Cedartown, GA	Cedartown
SuperPrep Top 50 in Georgia ♦ Two-time All-State ♦ Four-year starter ♦ Had 122 tackles, including 26 for loss, and 18.5 sacks as a senior ♦ Set school record with 57 career sacks ♦ Scored seven defensive touchdowns.			
SELMON , Zac TE	6-5, 231	Norman, OK	Norman
Two-year starter ♦ As a senior, had 32 receptions for 570 yards and seven touchdowns ♦ Had 37.4 yard punting average ♦ Letterman in basketball ♦ Valedictorian of graduating class.			
STUKES , Zachary DE	6-4, 245	Marietta, GA	Sprayberry
All-State ♦ Two-year starter ♦ Had 113 tackles, including 65 solo, 10 tackles for loss, eight quarterback sacks and five fumbles caused as a senior.			
TERESHINSKI , John TE	6-5, 205	Athens, GA	Athens Academy
Helped team to high school quarterfinals in two consecutive seasons ♦ Suffered broken leg during senior season ♦ Received Northeast Georgia Prep of the Week honors after making 31-yard touchdown reception, 11 tackles, two sacks, two blocked punts and one fumble caused in a game ♦ Lettered in basketball and baseball.			
TUCKER , Jyles DE	6-4, 250	Dover, NJ	Hargrave Military Acad.
Had 40 tackles, seven quarterback sacks and two interceptions returned for touchdown at Hargrave ♦ Super-Prep rated No. 14 player in New Jersey ♦ Four-year prep starter ♦ Played defensive end and quarterback ♦ As a senior, had 60 tackles and three fumbles recovered for touchdowns ♦ Had seven receiving touchdowns and six rushing touchdowns ♦ Had 128 tackles, including 20 tackles for loss, 22 sacks and three fumbles caused as a junior ♦ Four-year starter for basketball team, averaging 19 points and 11 rebounds per game.			
WOODS , Travon RB	5-11, 170	Altamonte Springs, FL	Lyman
Ranked No. 59 wide receiver nationally by Rivals.com ♦ PrepStar All-Region ♦ SuperPrep rated No. 58 player in Georgia ♦ Two-time All-Conference ♦ Runs 4.4 in the 40-yard dash.			

A LOOK AT THE DEMON DEAGONS

RESULTS

(7-6, 3-5)

41	at Northern Illinois	42
27	EAST CAROLINA	22
13	at North Carolina State	32
24	at Purdue	21
34	VIRGINIA	38
24	at Georgia Tech	21
36	DUKE	10
23	at Clemson	31
31	NORTH CAROLINA	0
21	FLORIDA STATE	34
30	NAVY	27
14	at Maryland	32
	SEATTLE BOWL	
38	Oregon	17

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	ATT	COMP	YARDS	PCT	TD	INT
MacPherson	223	123	1837	55.2	8	4
Randolph	48	24	333	50.0	0	2

RUSHING

NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD
Williams	186	852	4.6	27	5
Barclay	144	703	4.9	19	9
Davis	52	446	8.6	51	1
Burney	84	412	4.9	43	1

RECEIVING

NAME	No	YARDS	AVG	Lg	TD
Landfried	38	533	14.0	78	1
Davis	37	575	15.5	48	0
Anderson	23	535	23.3	70	6
Thomas	16	183	11.4	33	1

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Tackles: White 94, Bracy 82, Pace 73, Williams 72.
Interceptions: King 3, Williams 3.
Sacks: Pace 8, Scott 2, Argrow 2, Sharpe 2.
Tackles for Loss: Pace 22, White 5, Williams 5, Brantley 5.

SCHEDULE

Aug. 30	at Boston College
Sept. 6	NORTH CAROLINA STATE
Sept. 13	PURDUE
Sept. 20	EAST CAROLINA
Sept. 27	at Virginia
Oct. 11	GEORGIA TECH
Oct. 18	at Duke
Oct. 25	at Florida State
Nov. 1	CLEMSON
Nov. 8	at North Carolina
Nov. 15	CONNECTICUT
Nov. 29	MARYLAND

years. MacPherson, tailback Tarence Williams, receiver Fabian Davis, fullback Ovie Mughelli and guard Blake Henry — all offensive mainstays the past two years — have completed their eligibility, but the Deacons might miss Troy Calhoun even more.

Calhoun, the offensive coordinator the past two years, left after the season to become an assistant coach with the Denver Broncos. Grobe promoted offensive line coach Steed Lobotzke to coordinator and downplayed the impact of Calhoun's departure.

"We haven't skipped a beat," Grobe said. "There's no problem whatsoever. Lobo probably had as big a hand as anybody in what we were doing offensively in the past."

Jeff Mullen, who coached tight ends and tackles last season, is now coaching quarterbacks. Tom Elrod, a former Wake Forest walk-on who coached Wofford's offensive line last year, will take Calhoun's spot on the staff and coach the Deacons' fullbacks and tight ends.

OFFENSE

Last season the Deacons ran the ball 718 times for 3,135 yards and threw 272 passes for 2,170 yards. Grobe said he would welcome more balance this season after spending a large portion of the spring working on upgrading the Deacons' passing game.

"Offensively, with Cory Randolph, we feel he throws it pretty good and he's fairly mobile, so we were probably more of a 50-50 run-pass team in spring practice — which is a big switch for us," Grobe said. "I'm not sure that will continue in the fall. A lot will depend on our receivers and on Cory, how well he can throw the football in the fall."

"But last year, if you looked at our most productive football games, they were when we were more balanced and we weren't one-dimensional."

The passing game has some holes to fill

gibility to insufficient grades. Expect Randolph's No. 1 target to be Jason Anderson, who finished third on the team with 23 catches, but led the team with six touchdown catches and 23.3 yards per catch.

Sophomore Chris Davis showed promise last season while catching five passes as a true freshman. Senior Anthony Young, a converted quarterback, caught 10 for 116 yards. Grobe is expecting immediate contributions from redshirt freshman Willie Idlette.

James MacPherson was a solid, dependable quarterback who will be missed, but the Deacons may end up missing fullback Ovie Mughelli, offensive guard Blake Henry and tight end Ray Thomas even more. All were key blockers in the Deacons' relentlessly effective ground game.

Senior guard Tyson Clabo, Wake Forest's most talented offensive linemen, will be asked to anchor an offensive line that will most likely feature senior Mark Moroz and sophomore Wesley Bryant (a transfer from Florida) at tackles, senior Chad Rebar at guard, Blake Lingruen at center and R.D. Montgomery at tight end.

That line isn't set, because Lingruen will be pushed by sophomores Greg Rothoff and Craig Jones, Bryant by sophomore Greg Adkins and redshirt freshman Arby Jones, and Rebar by junior Joe Saltsich and redshirt freshman Steve Vallos.

Cornelius Birgs could spell Chris Barclay at tailback if he can stay in Grobe's good graces. For depth, Grobe has moved sophomore Dominic Anderson and redshirt freshman Napoleon Sykes from the secondary to tailback.

The fullback position is a question mark. Senior Nick Burney, a converted tailback, and junior Fred Staton both need to improve their academic standing in summer classes. The only other candidate is redshirt freshman Damon McWhite.

DEFENSE

No position is more perennially difficult for Wake Forest to stockpile than experienced, physically developed defensive linemen. That's one of the main reasons the Deacons played a 3-3-5 defense the past two years. Last year, Wake Forest had three solid, experienced defensive linemen in All-American Calvin Pace, Montique Sharpe and Rod Stephen. This season, it has none.

Sophomore Goryal Scales, who backed up Sharpe last season at nose tackle, is now the Deacons' most experienced defensive lineman. He will most likely share the position this season with Cori Stukes, a talented sophomore who last season played middle linebacker.



SAFETY QUINTIN WILLIAMS ENTERS HIS FOURTH SEASON AS A STARTER FOR THE DEMON DEACONS.

PHOTO BY TOMASSO DEROSA

At the end positions, the Deacons will find it difficult to stop anybody this season unless they get significant contributions from junior Jerome Nichols and sophomore John Finklea.

Senior Jamaal Argrow has moved from outside linebacker to back up Nichols and sophomore Arthur Orlebar emerged from spring practice as second-team behind Finklea. Two more possibilities are redshirt freshmen Daniel Orlebar and Jamil Smith, though Smith is coming off a knee injury that kept him out of spring practices.

Grobe said that Scales, Stukes, Nichols and Finklea all performed well during the spring.

"I see four guys who have kind of gone to the head of the class, and the rest of those guys are competitive for the last couple of slots," Grobe said. "We're going to play six guys up front. I think we've found four. We'd better find a couple more."

The rest of the defense looks promising. Junior middle linebacker Brad White and senior outside linebacker Kellen Brantley both started regularly last season and senior outside linebacker Dion

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

FS Quintin Williams

Emerging Star

TB Chris Barclay

Top Newcomer

QB Ben Mauk

with receivers Fabian Davis and Jax Landfried completing their eligibility, and Derrick Tarpe and Maurice Moten losing their eli-

WAKE FOREST

DEMON DEACONS SPRING ROSTER

No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN	No.	NAME	Pos.	CLASS	Ht.	Wt.	HOMETOWN
69	Dustin Abercrombie	OT	Fr	6-3	269	Kannapolis	49	Damon McWhite	FB	Fr	6-2	258	Woodbury, NJ
46	James Adams	SS	Fr	6-3	212	Durham	97	R.D. Montgomery	TE	Jr	6-6	229	Wilmington
66	Greg Adkins	OT	So	6-3	283	Lakeland, FL	78	Mark Moroz	OT	Sr	6-4	285	Welland, Ontario
23	Dominic Anderson	RB	So	6-0	204	Hollywood, FL	18	Nate Morton	WR	Fr	6-3	200	Harlingen, TX
80	Jason Anderson	WR	Jr	6-3	182	Charlotte	85	Jerome Nichols	DE	Jr	6-2	274	Glenn Dale, MD
48	Bryan Andrews	LB	Fr	6-6	235	Lima, OH	98	Arthur Orlebar	DE	Fr	6-4	246	Sterling, VA
42	Jamaal Argrow	DE	Sr	6-1	230	Savannah, GA	99	Daniel Orlebar	NT	Fr	6-4	257	Sterling, VA
28	Chris Barclay	RB	So	5-10	170	Louisville, KY	41	Chris Owen	LB	So	6-2	215	Forest, VA
2	Cornelius Birgs	RB	So	5-10	198	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	24	Ricky Perez	WR	Sr	6-1	182	Bedford Heights, OH
8	Caron Bracy	DB	Jr	6-0	222	Jacksonville, FL	81	Ryan Plackemeier	PK	So	6-3	230	Bonsall, CA
54	Kellen Brantley	OLB	Sr	6-3	238	Miami, FL	44	Jason Pratt	LB	So	6-0	221	Hixson, TN
27	Warren Braxton	DB	Jr	6-0	207	Madison Hts., VA	17	Cory Randolph	QB	So	6-1	188	Lake City, FL
73	Wesley Bryant	OT	So	6-4	285	Stanley	64	Chad Rebar	OG	Sr	6-3	314	Throop, PA
29	Nick Burney	FB	Sr	6-3	216	Glen Allen, VA	85	Robert Richter	WR	Jr	5-11	190	Naples, FL
83	Dan Callahan	TE	Fr	6-4	259	Montclair, NJ	67	Kreg Rothhoff	C	So	6-3	292	Massillon, OH
56	Christopher Carrothers	DE	Jr	6-3	252	Albemarle	70	Joe Salsich	OG	Jr	6-4	266	Annapolis, MD
17	Jason Carter	SS	Sr	5-10	189	Evanston, IL	57	Goryal Scales	NT	So	6-0	283	Winston-Salem
14	Obi Chukwumah	DB	Sr	6-2	199	Columbus, OH	20	Daryl Shaw	CB	Sr	5-9	179	Bladenboro
77	Tyson Clabo	OG	Sr	6-6	314	Knoxville, TN	10	Andrew Shelton	P	Sr	6-0	210	Mayodon
87	Chris Davis	WR	So	5-11	179	St. Petersburg, FL	4	Robert Simmons	CB	So	5-8	183	Hope Mills
51	Pierre Easley	LB	Fr	6-0	236	Stone Mountain, GA	88	Cassiel Smith	WR	So	6-2	203	Westwood, NJ
91	John Finklea	DE	So	6-5	273	Wheaton, MD	79	Jamil Smith	NT	Fr	6-3	257	Black Mountain
22	Josh Gattis	FS	Fr	6-2	195	Durham	5	Fred Staton	FB	Jr	6-0	248	Charlotte
30	Patrick Ghee	SS/OLB	Fr	6-2	213	Kingsport, TN	52	Cori Stukes	NT	So	6-0	250	Wilmington
28	Steve Hale	P	Jr	6-0	201	Eden	7	Riley Swanson	CB	Fr	6-0	171	Fayetteville, GA
50	Mike Hamlar	OLB	Jr	6-2	212	Roanoke, VA	6	Napoleon Sykes	RB	Fr	5-9	212	Woodstock, MD
82	Willie Idlette	WR	Fr	5-11	169	Chattanooga, TN	10	Zac Taylor	QB	Fr	6-3	187	Norman, OK
61	Arby Jones	OT	Fr	6-4	270	Somerset, KY	75	Steve Vallos	OG	Fr	6-3	302	Youngstown, OH
60	Craig Jones	C	So	6-1	280	Garland, TX	45	Brad White	ILB	Jr	6-1	226	Portsmouth, RI
9	Eric King	CB	Jr	5-9	185	Woodstock, MD	34	Dion Williams	LB	Sr	6-1	247	Stone Mountain, GA
18	Anders Larson	QB	So	6-3	175	Winston-Salem	25	Quintin Williams	FS	Sr	6-2	200	Goldsboro
76	Blake Lingruen	C	Jr	6-4	276	Liberty Center, OH	37	Matt Wisnosky	PK	So	6-1	181	Moorestown, NJ
35	Matt Lopatka	PK	So	6-1	177	Wilmington	59	Brian Waychik	OG	Jr	6-6	286	Poland, OH
35	Scott Marino	WR	Jr	5-11	190	Dunwoody, GA	38	Jack Yates	LB/SN	Sr	6-0	214	Chadbourne
3	Marcus McGruder	CB	Jr	5-9	175	Fairburn, GA	13	Anthony Young	WR	Sr	6-3	208	North Augusta, SC

2003 PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB	Cory Randolph, So./Zac Taylor, Fr.
TB	Chris Barclay, So./Cornelius Birgs, So.
FB	Nick Burney, Sr./Damon McWhite, Fr.
WR	Jason Anderson, Jr./Anthony Young, Sr.
WR	Chris Davis, So./Willie Idlette, Fr.
TE	R.D. Montgomery, Jr./Dan Callahan, Fr.
RT	Mark Moroz, Sr./Arby Jones, Fr.
RG	Tyson Clabo, Sr./Steve Vallos, Fr.
C	Blake Lingruen, Jr./Kreg Rothhoff, So.
LG	Chad Rebar, Sr./Joe Salsich, Jr.
LT	Wesley Bryant, So./Greg Adkins, So.
PK	Matt Wisnosky, So./Ryan Plackemeier, So.

DEFENSE

LE	Jerome Nichols, Jr./Jamaal Argrow, Sr.
NT	Goryal Scales, So./Cori Stukes, So.
RE	John Finklea, So./Arthur Orlebar, So.
LOLB	Dion Williams, Sr./Bryan Andrews, Fr.
MLB	Brad White, Jr./Pierre Easley, Fr.
ROLB	Kellen Brantley, Sr./Jason Pratt, So.
ROV	Caron Bracy, Jr./Obi Chukwumah, Sr.
LC	Eric King, Jr./Robert Simmons, So.
RC	Daryl Shaw, Sr./Marcus McGruder, Jr.
SS	Warren Braxton, Jr./James Adams, Fr.
FS	Quintin Williams, Sr./Josh Gattis, Fr.
P	Ryan Plackemeier, So./Steve Hale, Jr.

NOTEBOOK

Several Deacons were forced to sweat out the summer to see if they remain academically eligible for the 2003 season.

No position loomed as a bigger question mark than fullback, where both senior Nick Burney and junior Fred Staton needed strong classroom performances in summer school to make the grade.

Burney, a converted tailback who gained 412 yards on 84 carries last season, emerged from spring practice as the leading candidate to replace Ovie Mughelli, a four-year starter who completed his eligibility. Staton, another converted tailback who gained 583 yards in 2001, was ineligible last season because he lacked the required number of credits. The only other fullback on the depth chart is Damon McWhite, a redshirt freshman.

Senior Josh Warren, the backup to Ray Thomas at tight end last season, will also be looking to get back in the coaches' good graces after missing spring practice to concentrate on academics. If eligible, Warren will compete with junior R.D. Montgomery for the starting position at tight end.

The loss of receivers Derek Tharpe and Maurice Moten to insufficient grades prompted the Deacon coaches to move redshirt freshman Nate Morton from quarterback to wide receiver. Zac Taylor, another redshirt freshman, performed well behind first-team Cory Randolph during the spring, and the Deacons were eagerly anticipating the arrival of freshman Ben Mauck, who set national records for career passing attempts, completions and yards while playing at Kenton High School in Ohio.

• The Deacons' lack of defensive linemen might open the door for Jamil Smith, a redshirt freshman who missed spring practice because he was recovering from a torn anterior cruciate ligament. Coach Jim Grobe said he and his coaches certainly haven't forgotten about Smith, a physically impressive 6-3, 257-pound nose tackle from Black Mountain, N.C.

• Sophomore Craig Jones also missed spring practice, but Grobe said Jones was suspended during the spring for violating unspecified team policy. Jones is expected to battle junior Blake Lingruen and sophomore Kreg Rothhoff for the starting position at center.

—Dan Collins



JASON ANDERSON WILL BE THE DEACON QUARTERBACKS' NO. 1 TARGET.

PHOTO BY STEVE BEYER

WAKE FOREST

Big Plays Put Anderson in Spotlight

In the final game of his sophomore season, wide receiver Jason Anderson might have been too good for his own good.

A well-kept secret most of the season while playing for a Wake Forest team that rarely passed, Anderson showed off all his abilities in the Deacons' 38-17 victory over Oregon in the Seattle Bowl.

Anderson caught two touchdown bombs from quarterback James MacPherson, a 57-yard strike that gave the Deacons a 14-3 lead in the second quarter and a 63-yard reception that extended the lead to 31-17 in the third quarter.

No player was more instrumental to clinching the Deacons' second straight winning season and helping Wake Forest earn its fourth victory in six bowl appearances. And perhaps no player will have to face more consequences.

If Anderson's regular-season (20 catches for 382 yards and four touchdowns) didn't establish him as one of the ACC's most dangerous playmakers, his roasting of Oregon's secondary did.

"Unfortunately it did," Anderson said. "I don't like being put out there too much. It was good experience. I know it's going to be challenging next year, knowing that people know a little more about me now from that game."

"But they might think that was a fluke still."

If coach Jim Grobe is indeed seeking more offensive balance in 2003, then Anderson will be integral to the Deacons' plans. He's tall enough, at 6-3, to provide a sizeable target, and fast enough, as he proved against Oregon's cornerbacks, to blow by defenders for big plays.

His career hasn't been everything Anderson might have expected when he signed with Wake Forest after catching 112 passes for 2,282 yards at Butler High School in Charlotte. He missed three games last season with a separated shoulder, and often played entire games without getting more than a pass or two thrown his way.

More than a few people have asked Anderson if he made the right decision when choosing a college.

"They've come up to me and asked that," Anderson said. "But remember, when I was recruited they were throwing the ball, when Coach (Jim) Caldwell was here."

"Coach Grobe came in, and he thought our strength was running. But I've still done all right. It was frustrating at times, knowing that passing was not the first option. But I got used to it and adapted myself to the role that I play." □

Williams was a regular contributor. Two redshirt freshmen, Bryan Andrews and Pierre Easley, have the size and talent to make an immediate impact.

The strength of the defense appears to be a deep and experienced secondary featuring five returning starters in junior Eric King and senior Daryl Shaw at cornerback and senior Quintin Williams, junior Caron Bracy and junior Warrant Braxton at safety. Junior cornerback Marcus McGruder, a revelation two seasons ago, is looking to rally from a disappointing sophomore season and Grobe is high on the talent level of redshirt freshmen Josh Gattis, Patrick Ghee and James Adams at safety and Riley Swanson at cornerback.

"We're feeling like probably our linebacker and secondary corps is the strength and we're liable to be a little too inexperienced up front on the defensive line," Grobe said. "With that in mind, the

OF THE 44 PLAYERS LISTED AS FIRST OR SECOND TEAM AT THE COMPLETION OF SPRING PRACTICE, 13 ARE SOPHOMORES AND 10 ARE REDSHIRT FRESHMEN.

ways to get pressure will probably be with our linebackers and secondary. So we've worked a little bit more on our blitz stuff."

SPECIAL TEAMS

A serious liability early last season, the Deacons' special teams improved dra-

matically once Matt Wisnosky found his footing as a kicker and Ryan Plackemeier replaced Steve Hale as punter.

In the season opener, Wisnosky missed five of his first seven attempts, including kicks from 31 yards and 48 yards out in a 42-41 overtime loss to Northern Illinois. But he rallied to make 15 of his final 20 tries and closed the season by nailing his last four attempts.

Grobe entered 2002 hoping to redshirt Plackemeier, but with Hale averaging only 37.6 yards a punt, Grobe turned to Plackemeier, who responded by punting 32 times for a 43.2-yard average.

Fabian Davis will be missed as a punt returner after averaging 9.3 yards a return last season. Redshirt freshman Willie Idlette will get the first crack at replacing Davis.

Tailback Chris Barclay and cornerback Eric King are expected to return kickoffs.

— Dan Collins



VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES

Before spring practice, Virginia Tech coach Frank Beamer was asked about his team's prospects for 2003.

"We feel like we can be a good football team," he said. "But having the opportunity, and getting it done, are two

beating Air Force 20-13 in front of almost no one at Pacific Bell Park.

That allowed the Hokies to finish 10-4, a record almost everyone connected with the program would have gladly signed off on in August. They were, after all, inexperienced up the gut on defense. They also

Most of that anticipation revolves around the quarterback position. Incumbent Bryan Randall goes into the fall as the No. 1 man, but any slip-up could lead to Vick: The Sequel.

After redshirting last year, freshman Marcus Vick justified some of the hype

Finishing the Job is Job One

different things."

Beamer should know, especially after last year.

After an unexpected 8-0 start fueled by three consecutive victories over Top-25 opponents — LSU, Marshall and Texas A&M — Tech entered November ranked No. 3 in both national polls.

Instead of earning a spot in the Bowl Championship Series, the Hokies lost three in a row, all by eight points or less and all to Big East Conference underdogs (Pittsburgh, Syracuse, West Virginia).

As a result, Tech spent the New Year in San Francisco — rather than in Tempe or Miami — playing (and winning) something called the Diamond Walnut Bowl by

had to endure the lack of proven receivers and a hobbled senior quarterback who rarely played after Labor Day.

The scenario is different this time.

Tech returns eight starters on offense and nine on defense, plus several reserves who got decent playing time last year due to a late-season injury wave. The Hokies also play a favorable schedule over the season's first half and Big East favorite Miami must come to Blacksburg.

This could be, in the minds of many Tech fans, the best Hokie team since the 1999 team that rode the big-play exploits of Michael Vick to the national championship game.

"There's a lot of anticipation for this season," sophomore wide receiver Justin Hamilton said.

surrounding his future with an impressive spring. The only difference between Marcus and his older brother at this stage of their careers is that Marcus is right-handed.

Showing the same arm strength, incredible quickness and game-breaking speed as Michael, Marcus hit 10 of 15 passes and led his team to victory in Tech's spring game.

"This was the best spring practice we've ever had," Beamer said after that game. "One of the reasons was the efficiency of our two quarterbacks. They were both sharp, crisp out there."

Randall won't be easy to dislodge. Although he made some untimely turnovers after stepping in for Grant Noel (knee) during a 26-8 win over LSU on Sept. 1, Randall completed almost 64 percent of his passes for 2,134 yards and ran for 507.

Randall, a 6-0, 222-pound junior, rushed for more than 100 yards twice last year and set the all-time Big East record for passing yardage in a 50-42 triple overtime loss at Syracuse Nov. 9, rolling up 504 yards.

Kevin Rogers, the Hokies' quarterbacks coach, says Randall is the guy to beat.

"Bryan is going to be very competitive with the job," said Rogers, who coached quarterback Donovan McNabb at Syracuse. "I thought at times, he had spurts of playing great football."

Randall (or Vick) will get to throw to one of the conference's best receivers.

at a glance

2002: 10-4 overall; 3-4 Big East (T-4th)

COACH: Frank Beamer — At Virginia Tech: 117-69-2, 16 years; Overall: 159-92-4, 22 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 18; 8 offense, 9 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Bryan Randall, TB Kevin Jones, WR Ernest Wilford, C Jake Grove, DE Nathaniel Adibi, DE Cols Colas, LB Vegas Robinson, CB/WR DeAngelo Hall

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: With big-play threats throughout the offense, the Hokies should score a ton of points. Grove is probably the conference's top center. Adibi and Colas combined for 18 sacks

and are as quick to the quarterback as any ends in the Big East.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: Tech's offensive and defensive lines must show more consistency than last year. Randall killed a lot of drives with turnovers, including a crushing interception at the end of the loss to West Virginia.

OVERVIEW: If Tech's line play measures up, it's capable of challenging Miami for the Big East title. Miami must visit Blacksburg in November. That game is sandwiched around road trips to West Virginia and Pittsburgh — a three-game stretch that will determine if the Hokies can reach the Bowl Championship Series.

HOKIES

KEVIN JONES ENTERS HIS JUNIOR SEASON WITH 1,726 CAREER RUSHING YARDS.

PHOTO BY ICON PHOTOS





DEANGELO HALL IS ONE OF THE NATION'S MOST VERSATILE PLAYERS.

PHOTO BY RONALD MARTINEZ/GETTY IMAGES

Ernest Wilford enjoyed a breakout season in 2002 after being vilified for dropping a potential game-tying two-point conversion pass the previous year against Miami. Wilford, a 6-foot-4 senior, caught a school-record 51 passes for 925 yards and seven touchdowns last season.

Richard Johnson, a speedy junior who had 14 receptions last season, will probably start opposite Wilford. The addition of cornerback DeAngelo Hall, the team's fastest player, for about 30 plays a game at flanker will only make the offense more dangerous.

Kevin Jones (871 yards, nine TDs) split playing time at tailback with Lee Suggs last season, but now Suggs is in the NFL and Jones is the main man in the backfield. If Jones stays healthy, 1,500 rushing yards or more isn't out of the question.

The offensive line, although it features the Big East's top returning center in Jake Grove, still has question marks. So does the defensive line after getting shredded in the last five regular-season games.

If those questions are answered positively and Tech can survive a potentially brutal opening to the season's second half

(at West Virginia, Miami, at Pittsburgh), the Hokies could be on their way to another shot at the national championship.

OFFENSE

Tailback Kevin Jones' health will be a critical issue for Tech. He suffered a pulled hamstring early in the Hokies' 28-21 loss to Pittsburgh on Nov. 2 and didn't return until Nov. 20.

Tech coaches believe backups Cedric Humes or Mike Imoh could get the job done if they had to play, but since neither player is proven at this point, this is one of the few spots where Tech can't afford an injury.

Jones, considered the nation's top prep running back when he chose the Hokies over the home-state advances of Joe Paterno's Penn State two years ago, enters his junior season with 1,726 career rushing yards, despite making just four career starts.

At 6-0, 209 pounds, Jones possesses both the breakaway speed and the durability to be the featured back. In a victory at Virginia two years ago, Jones carried the ball 37 times and never seemed to lose a step.

"He's a guy who has a chance to be one of the best football players ever to play at Virginia Tech," running backs coach Billy Hite said. "He's gotten so much better in every phase of the game and knows so much more. He's ready to take the position and run with it."

Even the best running backs need help from their offensive linemen, and the Hokies face plenty of questions up front. None of them are at center, where senior Jake Grove returns for another season of dominating opposing linemen. Grove avoided injury for the first time in his career and proved to be the line's anchor.

Had Brett Romberg not been at Miami, Grove would have probably been a first team All-Big East pick. As it was, his play was good enough to earn him a fourth team All-America mention from *The Sporting News*.

"Jake has all of the nuts and bolts that you want a center to have," offensive coordinator Bryan Stinespring said. "He is tough, physical, aggressive and has the intangibles needed to play the position well."

Beyond Grove, the most experienced lineman is left guard Jacob Gibson, who made 12 starts last year. The versatile Gibson has played every position on the line but center at Tech. James Miller, who started twice in 2002, is the right guard. Jon Dunn and Jimmy Martin, who each started seven times at left tackle last sea-

HOKIES

2003 DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB Bryan Randall, Jr.*/Marcus Vick, Fr.

RB Kevin Jones, Jr./Cedric Humes, So.

FB Doug Easlick, Sr.*/Cedric Humes, So.

FL Richard Johnson, Jr./Justin Hamilton, So.

SE Ernest Wilford, Sr.*/Chris Shreve, Sr.

TE Keith Willis, Sr.* OR Jeff King, So.

LT Jimmy Martin, So.*/Reggie Butler, So.

LG Jacob Gibson, Sr.*/Will Montgomery, So.

C Jake Grove, Sr.*/Robert Ramsey, Jr.

RG James Miller, Jr./Jason Murphy, So.

RT Jon Dunn, Jr.*/Brandon Gore, Fr.

PK Carter Warley, Sr.*/Nic Schmitt, So.

DEFENSE

DE Nathaniel Adibi, Sr.*/Jim Davis, Sr.

DT Jason Lallis, Jr.* OR Jonathan Lewis, Jr.

DT Kevin Lewis, Jr.* OR Tim Sandidge, So.

DE Cols Colas, Sr.*/Noland Burchette, Fr.

OLB Brandon Manning, Jr.*/James Anderson, So.

ILB Mikal Baaqee, Jr.*/Chad Cooper, Jr.

ILB Vegas Robinson, Sr.*/Blake Warren, So.

FC Vincent Fuller, Jr./Eric Green, Jr.

FS Jimmy F. Williams, So./Mike Daniels, Jr.

ROV Michael Crawford, Sr.*/D.J. Walton, So.

BC DeAngelo Hall, Jr.*/Garnell Wilds, Sr.

P Vinnie Burns, Jr.*/Nic Schmitt, So.

son, will play the tackles spots.

Dunn is a potentially dominating player who struggled with occasional penalties and missed assignments last year. Martin is much quicker, which is why he'll start on the quarterback's blind side while Dunn moves to right tackle.

It wouldn't be a shock to see one of two highly touted freshmen, Tripp Carroll or Brandon Gore, muscle into the picture

at some point.

"From top to bottom, we're probably more athletic than we've ever been in the offensive line," Beamer said.

But will they be effective? Check back in October.

DEFENSE

Through eight games last year, the defense appeared to be perhaps the best of Bud Foster's units at Tech. It had allowed less than 40 rushing yards per game, forced 25 turnovers and yielded only 10.8 points per game.

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

C Jake Grove

Emerging Star

CB/WR DeAngelo Hall

Top Newcomer

LB Vince Hall

But beginning with a 28-21 loss to Pittsburgh on Nov. 2, the Hokies allowed 100-yard rushers in each of the last five regular season games and never seemed to be able to get off the field.

"As we evaluated our film, it seemed to come back to fundamentals," Foster said. "Guys not securing their gap, guys getting cut off — just inconsistent play. There was nothing wrong with the defensive scheme. Last season, every snap was a learning experience for some of our guys. We have to get beyond that and mature as a unit."

Maturity should come easier with so many starters back. Ends Nathaniel Adibi and Cols Colas each had nine sacks and both have the quickness to get around most any offensive tackle.

All four players who started at least two games at tackle return. That includes Jonathan Lewis, who led all linemen in tackles despite starting only three games. The addition of North Carolina transfer Isaac Montgomery adds even more depth to the line.

The Hokies also return three starting linebackers. Vegas Robinson played at an All-Big East level until he missed three games with an ankle injury, including losses to Pittsburgh and Syracuse. Mikal Baaqee led Tech in tackles last year with 112 and added 15 pounds in the off-season, allowing him to match up better with some of the Big East's more physical

backs. Brandon Manning maximized his physical skills to finish with 75 tackles.

The strength of this unit is the secondary, even though three-year free safety Willie Pile completed his eligibility. DeAngelo Hall, Eric Green (who returns after missing the 2002 season with a torn ACL), Camell Wilds and Vincent Fuller give Tech a depth of talent at cornerback.

Fuller emerged as a revelation following a move from safety, intercepting four passes and holding up well when offenses aimed their air attacks at him.

Gutsy Michael Crawford, who missed just one game over the season's last five weeks while undergoing tests for possible lymphoma, returns with a clean bill of health. He had 49 tackles and played a big role in the Hokies' win at Texas A&M.

The one newcomer to the secondary's starting lineup is free safety Jimmy Williams, who demonstrated in the San Francisco Bowl game that Tech might not miss Pile all that much. He recorded nine tackles against Air Force's difficult wishbone attack and never seemed out of position.

SPECIAL TEAMS

It was another inconsistent year for Frank Beamer's beloved kicking units.

Tech returned kicks well, with DeAngelo Hall returning two punts for touchdowns and Justin Johnson again showing the potential to be a game-breaking kickoff return guy. Vinnie Burns blossomed into one of the Big East's top punters and the Hokies blocked seven kicks.

Tech also gave up its share of long returns and allowed opponents to block two punts for the second consecutive year.

Most importantly, the Hokies proved to be inept on field goals again, converting just 12 of 23 field goal attempts. As a team, Tech is 23 of 44 on field goal attempts over the past two years.

Carter Warley is capable on placements when healthy, but he's been limited by back problems the past two years and his stats have suffered. He's made only 21 of 38 since an excellent freshman year, when he made seven of nine, including a game-winner.

Should Warley not be able to return to that form, Nic Schmitt or Brandon Pace would have a chance to inherit the kicking duties.

There was nothing erratic about Burns' performance in 2002. He averaged 40.5 yards per punt, only 30 of his 64 punts were returned and dropped 20 punts inside the 20-yard line.

— Bucky Dent

HOKIES

2002 RESULTS

10-4 (3-4 Big East)

63	Arkansas State	7
26	LSU	8
47	MARSHALL	21
13	at Texas A&M	3
30	at Western Michigan	0
28	at Boston College	23
35	RUTGERS	14
20	TEMPLE	10
21	PITTSBURGH	28
42	at Syracuse (3OT)	50
18	WEST VIRGINIA	21
21	VIRGINIA	9
45	at Miami (Fla.)	56
SAN FRANCISCO BOWL		
20	Air Force	13

2003 SCHEDULE

Aug. 31	UCF
Sept. 6	JAMES MADISON
Sept. 18	TEXAS A&M
Sept. 27	CONNECTICUT
Oct. 4	at Rutgers
Oct. 11	SYRACUSE
Oct. 22	at West Virginia
Nov. 1	MIAMI (Fla.)
Nov. 8	at Pittsburgh
Nov. 15	at Temple
Nov. 22	BOSTON COLLEGE
Nov. 29	at Virginia

WEST VIRGINIA **MOUNTAINEERS**

The doubters were there. Quincy Wilson can remember them.

"There were some people who were pro-Don (Nehlen)," said Wilson, West Virginia's senior running back, referring to the coach Rich Rodriguez replaced two years ago. "Especially when we

Mountaineers had a realistic chance to win in the fourth quarter.

By the time the season reached season-ending games at Virginia Tech and Pittsburgh, the Mountaineers knew nothing else but winning. In venues where "good" losses would have been acceptable, the Moun-

Now we have to realize why we had it and continue that effort."

Why the Mountaineers succeeded when many thought they wouldn't was simple — they ran the ball better than everyone else in a run-oriented conference and milked a plus-19 turnover ratio

Taste Leaves 'Em Hungry for More Success

struggled at first."

Funny thing was, it wasn't supposed to be this way. Nehlen's off-tackle offense had grown stodgy to a majority of Mountaineer fans, but his winning habits never got old.

So when Rodriguez and his new spread offense stumbled to a 3-8 mark in 2001, and then began the 2002 campaign with a 3-2 mark that included lopsided losses to Wisconsin and Maryland, the grumbling intensified.

Running between the tackles suddenly seemed like a good idea.

At that point, WVU began winning and kept on winning — with the exception of a loss to Miami in which the

taineers instead pulled off dramatic wins, thanks to last-second stops by their defense.

Even a clunker in the Continental Tire Bowl (a 48-22 loss to Virginia) couldn't fully diminish the final outcome. In a season where a .500 record would have represented legitimate progress, West Virginia found a way to go 9-4 and finish second in the Big East Conference at 6-1.

Rodriguez's game plan for this year is simple: "What we need to do, because it forged a lot of our success last year, is continue to approach the game with the attitude that they feel they need to prove themselves as players and as a program.

"We made so many improvements last year, but falling short in the bowl shows us there is still a lot we can do. We had a taste of success and we liked it.

for all it was worth.

For all the hype about spreading the field and creating matchup problems on the perimeter, running the ball remains the heart of Rodriguez's offense. His offenses at Tulane, Clemson and West Virginia have been at their best when chewing up yardage and clock time with the ground game.

There's no reason that will change this year, at least initially. Even though the remarkably dependable Avon Cobourne has graduated, the Mountaineers will look to the running game first.

That's because Wilson, who replaces Cobourne at the "superback" position, and quarterback Rasheed Marshall bring back a combined 1,567 yards and 19 touchdowns. Wilson averaged fewer than 11 carries a game last year, yet still finished eighth in Big East rushing with 901 yards. With good health and 20 carries per game this season, 1,500 yards is a realistic possibility.

Marshall rushed for 666 yards, more than any quarterback in Big East history, and scored 13 touchdowns. He completed a relatively low 53.7 percent of his passes for 1,616 yards, but threw the fewest interceptions (five) of any Big East quarterback.

"It's important for Rasheed to continue to improve at the rate he did last year," Rodriguez said.

With the running game producing more than 283 yards per game, Marshall didn't need to be Brett Favre. And with just two receivers catching 20 or more passes, Marshall didn't have many reliable options to aim for on third and long.

Marshall's ability to avoid mistakes, however, helped the WVU defense adhere to its game plan — make oppo-

at a glance

2002: 9-4 overall; 6-1 Big East (2nd)

COACH: Rich Rodriguez — At West Virginia: 12-12, 2 years; Overall: 57-48-2, 10 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 10; 5 offense, 4 defense, kicker

PLAYERS TO WATCH: RB Quincy Wilson, QB Rasheed Marshall, WR Miquelle Henderson, OT Tim Brown, LB Grant Wiley, LB Adam Lehnortt, CB Lance Frazier, CB Brian King

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: With the departure of Avon Cobourne, Quincy Wilson becomes the primary focus of the running game. He and Rasheed Marshall should produce more than their share of big plays. Grant Wiley is the unquestioned leader defensively, while Lance Frazier

and Brian King are capable cover guys.
POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: Inexperience along both lines, particularly on defense, could hurt this club in early non-conference games against Wisconsin and Maryland. The Mountaineers also need another big play threat at wideout or defenses will crowd the line to stop Wilson.

OVERVIEW: West Virginia got back on track last fall. The Mountaineers mined the most out of their available talent, finishing the regular season with dramatic road wins over Virginia Tech and Pittsburgh. It could be difficult to match last year's success, but look for the Mountaineers to win seven or eight games and go bowling again.

MOUNTAINEERS

nents work a long field, minimize big plays and capitalize on mistakes.

With seven new starters in the lineup, the Mountaineer defense may need an adjustment period. That's particularly true up front, where an entirely new cast must come through.

At end, senior Fred Blueford and junior Ben Lynch have one career start between them. Sophomore tackle Ernest Hunter brings an abundance of promise, but he made just two starts last season before suffering a season ending broken leg.

Don't be surprised if freshmen defensive linemen such as Pat Liebig, Chris Malamet, Rachid Stoury, Craig Wilson and Warren Young all get a chance to show what they can do.

There are no such worries at linebacker or in the secondary. Grant Wiley, a starter since he arrived in Morgantown, is back for his fourth season at linebacker. Experienced backups Adam Lehnortt and Leandre Washington appear ready to move into the starting lineup at the other linebacker spots.

Solid cover men Lance Frazier and Brian King are back at cornerback, with Jahmile Addae returning at free safety.

Todd James, who hit 11 of 16 field goal attempts last year, is back to handle field goals and extra points and may punt, since the Mountaineers need to improve on last year's 36.5-yard punting average.

With just 10 returning starters back, including James, improving on last year's progress might be difficult. But Rodriguez thinks his team will remain as hungry as it was in 2002.

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

RB Quincy Wilson

Emerging Star

QB Rasheed Marshall

Top Newcomer

RB Kay-Jay Harris

OFFENSE

It turns out coach Rich Rodriguez's alleged preference for sleeker linemen rather the modern-day behemoth is more perception than fact.

"There's a misconception that's come up," he said. "I read where I don't want big linemen — but I'm not against having big linemen. But I want the linemen we have to be able to move, because that's

what our offense calls for."

Which is why, despite Rodriguez's protestations, the Mountaineer offensive line averages less than 300 pounds per man, a rarity in this era of college football. Last year's line may have been "light" compared to other teams, but WVU still rushed for 71 more yards per game than any other Big East team.

The 2002 offensive line, though, was a veteran group anchored by two-year starters Lance Nimmo and Zack Dillow, and Ken Sandor, who made 19 starts over the previous two seasons.

Those three are gone, so the Mountaineers must rebuild around tackle Tim Brown, a two-year starter, and junior guard Jeff Berk, who already has 16 career starts. Senior Ben Timmons should fit into the center spot.

Geoff Lewis or Justin Williams are battling for the open guard spot, while sophomores Josh Stewart and Travis Garrett are candidates to replace Nimmo, picked by Detroit in the fourth round of the 2003 NFL Draft.

"We lost some good players," said Rodriguez, "but I think we still have some good leaders there like Tim Brown, Geoff Lewis, Jeff Berk and Ben Timmons. Behind those veterans, we need guys like Justin Williams, Josh Stewart, Dan Mozes and Travis Garrett to take a step forward."

West Virginia also will need reinforcements at wide receiver. Miquelle Henderson is back after catching a team-high 40 passes, but he suffered a broken leg during spring practice. No other returning wideout caught more than five passes in 2002, although there's hope Aaron Neal and Travis Garvin will mature quickly into credible threats. Garvin, a highly touted junior college transfer when he arrived last year, made considerable strides during the spring.

Redshirt freshman Nathan Forse could also slip into the picture. He caught a team-high seven passes in the spring game and has developed chemistry with Marshall.

Josh Bailey and Tory Johnson give the Mountaineers solid play at tight end. Neither catches many passes, but both block well.

DEFENSE

West Virginia returns just one starter in its front six, but that player is special.

From the moment he arrived at West Virginia, Grant Wiley has been invaluable to the Mountaineers. He's started every game he's played in over the past three years — he missed two games as a sophomore with a hamstring injury — and has been one of the most productive players in school history.

Wiley has 325 career tackles, includ-

MOUNTAINEERS

2003 DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB Rasheed Marshall, Jr.*/Charles Hales, Jr.
RB Quincy Wilson, Sr./Brian Wright, Fr.
FB Moe Fofana, Sr./Adam King, Sr.
WR Miquelle Henderson, Jr.*/Nathan Forse, Fr.
WR Travis Garvin, Sr./Aaron Neal, Sr.
TE Josh Bailey, So.*/Tory Johnson, Sr.
C Ben Timmons, Sr./Justin Williams, Jr.
OG Jeff Berk, Jr.*/Adam Howell, So.
OG Geoff Lewis, Sr./Justin Williams, Jr.
OT Tim Brown, Sr.*/Garin Justice, So.
OT Josh Stewart, So./Travis Garrett, So.
PK Todd James, Sr.*/Eric Daugherty, Fr.

DEFENSE

DE Fred Blueford, Sr./Aaron McCartney, So.
DT Ernest Hunter, So./Kelvin Dubouse, Jr.
DE Ben Lynch, Jr./Warren Young, Fr.
LB Grant Wiley, Sr.*/Scott Gyorko, Jr.
LB Adam Lehnortt, Jr./Mo Howard, Jr.
LB Leandre Washington, Sr./Alex Lake, So.
CB Lance Frazier, Sr.*/Anthony Mims, So.
CB Brian King, Sr.*/George Shehl, So.
SS Adam Jones, So./Mike Henshaw, Jr.
WS Mike Lorello, So./James Woodruff, Jr.
FS Jahmile Addae, Jr.*/Lawrence Audena, Jr.
P Todd James, Sr./Brad Cooper, Jr.

ing a team-high 133 last year, and has an outside chance to supplant Darryl Talley as the program's all-time leading tackler with a monster senior year.

For that to happen, Wiley needs 160 tackles. But don't bet against him.

"We know what we have in Grant. He has a knack for making the big play at the critical time like few players I've ever seen," Rodriguez said.

Case in point: the fourth quarter of last year's win at Virginia Tech. On fourth and goal from inside the one with under five minutes left, the Hokies handed off to tailback Lee Suggs.

That's normally a sure bet. Suggs scored in the last 27 games of his Tech career, an all-time record streak in NCAA annals, but he failed to get past Wiley, 6-1, 230-pound roadblock. When Wiley made

WEST VIRGINIA

Wilson Set to Provide Answers



QUINCY WILSON RUSHED FOR 901 YARDS AND SIX TOUCHDOWNS IN 2002.

PHOTO BY DOUG PENSINGER/GETTY IMAGES

West Virginia's 1-2 superback duo of Avon Cobourne and Quincy Wilson rushed for 2,611 yards last year and became known as "Q&A."

A is gone, trying to make it with the NFL's Detroit Lions. Q is back and he'll probably present a lot of questions defenses can't answer.

Wilson, a 5-9, 215-pound senior from Weirton, W. Va., says he's ready to be the workhorse.

"I've worked hard this winter," he said. "I know we've got good backs behind me, but I just want to get 20, 25 carries a game."

With just 140 rushes in 2002, Wilson rolled up 901 yards — good for eighth in the running back-rich Big East Conference — and scored six touchdowns — even though he had 20 fewer attempts than anyone else in the conference's top 10.

His 6.4 yards per carry led the conference, and ranked fourth-best in Big East history.

Wilson's style is best exemplified by his 42-yard touchdown run in last year's 21-18 upset win at Virginia Tech. Wilson simply found the hole and shot through it without any fancy east-west juking and jiving.

"I was always trying to get to the

corner when I first came here," he said, "and I learned these guys are fast on this level. I'm strictly a north-south runner now. I'm a power guy and I try to wear on the defense at the end."

Wilson should be even more powerful this season. After adhering to a strict conditioning program over the winter, he won a "Dominator" award from the coaching staff for his performance in the weight room.

Benching 380 pounds or doing an NFL combine-style 225 pounds 21 times in a row, as he did this spring, is nothing new in the Wilson family. His father, Otis, was an All-Pro linebacker on some great Chicago Bear defenses in the mid-1980s.

Wilson's strength and speed will be the focal point of the Mountaineers' devoted fans this fall. Last season's season-ending four-game winning streak not only helped West Virginia finish second in the Big East, but also revived interest in the program.

"We definitely brought the fans back," he said. "The expectations are higher and we're now used to coach (Rich) Rodriguez's system."

Opponents will have to get used to a lot of Q in 2003. The A's won't be easy to find. □

the stop, the Mountaineers came through with a defensive stand few in the state will forget — as well as the 21-18 win.

While Wiley is back, everyone else in the front six is not. That's not to say West Virginia completely lacks for capable performers at those spots.

Adam Lehnortt recorded 63 tackles last year while serving in a backup role to Ben Collins at middle linebacker. The job's his now and Mountaineer insiders wouldn't be surprised if he had a huge season.

Leandre Washington recorded 37 stops last year as a backup to two-year starter James Davis. Washington, a 5-11, 220-pound senior, is one of the team's better athletes and should slip seamlessly into a starting role.

The Mountaineers' secondary offers plenty of experience. Cornerbacks Lance Frazier and Brian King have combined for 46 starts in their career and can match up with almost any Big East receiver.

King finished with 79 tackles and tied for second in the team with three interceptions, including one in the end zone with 12 seconds left to seal WVU's 2002 victory over Virginia Tech.

Free safety Jahmile Addae quietly turned in solid numbers last season, finishing with 99 tackles and leading the team with 16 pass breakups, evidence of his ability to cover sideline to sideline.

The Mountaineers' switch to a 3-3-5 defense was successful. While they managed only 16 sacks (next-to-last in the Big East), they forced more turnovers (34) than any conference team but Virginia Tech and cut off big plays.

SPECIAL TEAMS

The kicking game produced a mix of good and bad for West Virginia last year. The Mountaineers were solid on kickoff returns, kickoffs coverage and field goals, but struggled with punting, punt returns

and extra points.

First, the good news: Todd James' high, deep kickoffs resulted in the opposition averaging only 19.2 yards on 48 returns, giving the Mountaineers a field-position advantage.

WVU averaged 22 yards on kickoff returns, but will need to replace last year's top return man, Phil Braxton (25.3 per return).

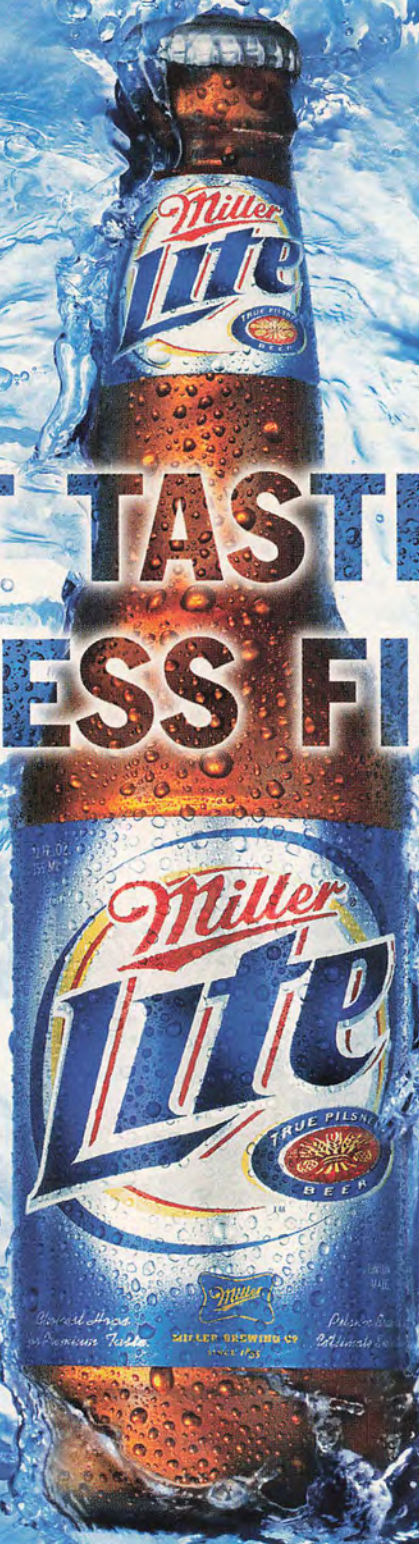
James converted nine of his 11 field goal attempts from inside the 40, and has the leg strength to nail longer attempts, but his four missed PATs show he needs better consistency.

Now the bad news. The Mountaineers finished last in the Big East in gross and net punting (29.3 per punt) and punt returns (7.0 yards per return).

"We're going to reorganize some of our approach to that part of the game," Rodriguez admitted.

— Bucky Dent

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LESS FILLING**



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EAST CAROLINA PIRATES

East Carolina's former coach didn't much care for the fans or media, preferring to operate in an insular world in which he made few friends outside the football program.

That worked just fine when the Pirates were winning most of the time and con-

while also winning over fans, media and administrators. If he can coach football as well as Logan, and preach the sport as well as he preached it this spring, the Pirates might just be on to something.

"John brings an outstanding reputation as a coach, motivator and recruiter,"

Thompson had already made the effort to invite the nearly 20,000-strong ECU student body to a scrimmage, then held a free coaching clinic for high school coaches a week later, followed by the spring game that was open to the public. Just like that, East Carolina's public

New Coaches, New Energy ... New Results?

sidered a program on the rise.

But when they slumped to 4-8 in 2002, Steve Logan's act got old fast, and he was fired.

His career record of 69-58 placed him among the most successful football coaches in ECU history, but with little equity built among fans, administrators and media, Logan was dispatched after his first disastrous season in a decade.

Enter John Thompson, the former Florida defensive coordinator who spent his first spring in Greenville trying to restore the Pirates to their winning ways

said ECU athletics director Mike Hamrick, who came out on top in a longtime power struggle with Logan, who followed 9-2 and 8-4 seasons in 1999 and 2000 with 6-6 and 4-8 records the past two seasons. "We are looking forward to him leading our program for many years to come."

Before he even coaches his first game on Sept. 1 at Cincinnati, Thompson already has won over two important constituents in today's college football climate: the fans and the media. Thompson won them over partly by reinstating the spring game — which Logan had canceled in a decidedly fan-unfriendly move in 1998 — and made himself accessible to local reporters.

relations deficit had been erased.

"The new coaching staff seems really enthusiastic," ECU fan John Whichard of Greenville told the *Raleigh News & Observer*. "I've been very impressed."

Now the task for Thompson is to put a product on the field that can compete with his fan-friendly style off it.

To that end, he hired longtime Clemson assistant Rick Stockstill to run a wide-open offense that will operate out of the shotgun roughly 60 percent of the time. Stockstill's goal is to produce an offense that stretches defenses vertically with the pass while still being able to pound out yardage with a power ground game.

It's an ambitious offense, but then, Thompson is an ambitious coach.

"We want to win championships — a lot of championships," Thompson said. "We are going to be an exciting team on both sides of the football. The way we have played defense over the years is the way we are going to play offense here. We are going to be an up-tempo, fast-paced, unpredictable offense. Just like we will be on defense."

For the Pirates to earn their fourth bowl in five years after missing out on the postseason in 2002, they will need more mature play from quarterback Paul Troth.

The Pirates are loaded with solid running backs, including former linebacker Vonta Leach, who moved to fullback and pounded out 108 yards on 14 carries in the spring game.

The key, though, will be Troth. He came to East Carolina as a highly recruited prospect out of Charlotte, but Logan essentially squandered Troth's true freshman season by playing him in just three

at a glance

2002: 4-8 overall; 4-4 C-USA (T-5th)

COACH: John Thompson — At East Carolina and overall: 1st year

RETURNING STARTERS: 13; 8 offense, 5 defense

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Paul Troth, RB Art Brown, WR Terrance Copper, OT Brian Rimpf, DT Damane Duckett, LB Chris Moore, KR Marvin Townes

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: Art Brown was one of C-USA's better running backs last season, and enjoyed one of the best seasons for a running back in school history. Running behind All-American tackle candidate Brian Rimpf and three other returning starters up front, Brown should be even more productive this season.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: The defense was bad last season, and it will be inexperienced this season. The new coaching

staff will bring a hustling, fiery demeanor to a unit that could use an infusion of fresh ideas and faces.

OVERVIEW: The Pirates underachieved last season, which is why Steve Logan's 11th season in Greenville was his last. Thompson brings in a solid resume, with defensive coordinator experience at Arkansas, Southern Miss and Florida, but like both his coordinators (Rick Stockstill on offense, Jerry Odom on defense), he has never held his current job title at the Division I-A level. While that should make for some enthusiasm, it also should make for some bumps in the road as the players not only adjust to their new coaches but the coaches adjust to their new jobs as well. Look for the Pirates to play hard if not all that well, unless Troth and a handful of defensive backs are significantly more effective than they were a year ago.

PIRATES



THE PIRATES WILL NEED MORE PRODUCTION FROM PAUL TROTH IN ORDER TO SUCCEED.

PHOTO BY ICON SPORTS

games and letting him throw four passes all year as David Garrard's seldom-used backup. As a sophomore last season Troth threw for 2,315 yards but made his share of rookie mistakes, throwing 20 interceptions to 15 touchdown passes and completing just 49.3 percent of his passes.

The good news is that Troth is now a junior coming off his third spring practice — he enrolled at ECU in January 2001 —

who combined for 74 catches worth 1,254 yards and nine touchdowns.

Of course, it always helps to play behind a veteran offensive line, and the Pirates return four starters up front. Also, senior Terrance Copper, ECU's leading returning receiver after catching 30 passes in 2002, showed some big-play ability in spring practice. Copper had eight catches for 126 yards and two touchdowns in the spring game, but he hasn't scored a touchdown in a real game since his freshman season.

To have a different outcome from last season, when the Pirates failed to reach .500 for the first time since 1997, they will need a vastly improved defense to go with a vastly improved Troth.

The Pirates usually allowed opponents to do whatever those chose last season, giving up 238 passing yards and 207 running yards per game. The combination gave opponents an edge of more than 100 yards per game — 445 to 338 for East Carolina — and went a long way toward determining the Pirates' dismal record.

Senior Damane Duckett could be a much-needed revelation this season. Duckett, a 6-foot-7, 300-pound defensive tackle, has the talent to be the focal point of every opposing offense's game plan. But he's going to need a lot of help from a young front seven that starts four sophomores, a junior and two seniors.

Last season's top three tacklers are gone, and the loss of manpower was evident in one spring scrimmage in which two ECU backs combined for 267 yards on 40 carries — and neither was named Art Brown, the starting tailback who ran for 1,029 yards last season but missed the spring with a knee injury.

Some of the defense's problem in the spring stemmed from a rash of injuries, none serious, yet enough of them to throw a wrench into defensive coordinator Jerry Odom's attempts to install his defense.

"Every position's open, and we've had some great competition," Odom said. "What hurt us some is we had about six (regulars) out with various ailments. It limps us a little bit, so we had to be creative in some of our other packages."

A little creativity couldn't hurt an unimaginative ECU defense that was among the nation's worst last season. A little enthusiasm won't be such a bad thing, either. Shep Campbell, a graduate assistant coach on the defensive side, got so fired up before the spring game that he threw his shoulder out of joint — in warm-ups.

"That tells you a little bit about how physical we've been," Thompson said.

PIRATES 2003 DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB Paul Troth, Jr.*/Desmond Robinson, Jr.
TB Art Brown, Sr.*/Marvin Townes, Jr.
FB Vonta Leach, Sr./Dashaun Stephens, So.
WR Edwin Rios, Jr./Bryson Bowling, So.
WR Terrance Copper, Sr.*/Damarcus Fox, Jr.
TE Tutu Moye, Jr.*/Paul Kaplar, Sr.
LT Brian Rimpf, Sr.*/Eric Graham, Fr.
LG Charlie Dempsey, Jr.*/Hagen Mason, Jr.
C Doug White, Sr.*/Hunter Wood, So.
RG Brian Fox, Sr.*/Gary Freeman, So.
RT Brandon Pope, Sr./Corey Schmidt, Sr.
K Cameron Broadwell, Jr./Chris Baglio, Jr.

DEFENSE

DE Guy Whimper, So./T.R. Holland, Fr.
DT Damane Duckett, Sr.*/Dontre' Brown, Fr.
DT Derek Helms, Sr./Eric Foushee, Sr.
DE Ike Emodi, So./Lorenza Pickett, So.
OLB Josh Chilsom, So.*/Kent Nealy, Sr.
MLB Chris Moore, So.*/Jemarcus Veal, So.
OLB Eric Butler, Jr./Richard Koonce, So.
CB Brandon Rainer, Sr./Donald Whitehead, Jr.
FS Richard Moton, Sr./Antonie Nealy, So.
SS Travis Heath, Sr.*/Mickey McCoy, So.
CB Reicko Jones, So.*/Jared Brogden, So.
P Ryan Dougherty, Fr./Chris Baglio, Jr.

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

TB Art Brown

Emerging Star

DT Damane Duckett

Top Newcomer

P Ryan Dougherty

but the bad news is he will be learning from a new offensive coordinator while missing his top two receivers from last season: Richard Alston and Torey Morris,

"We said we were going to be physical."

He also said he wanted to win championships — a lot of championships. Those will wait another year or two at the earliest, but Thompson already has charmed the media and fans, and it looks like he's made a positive impression on his players as well.

"He comes out here very intense, and he's just a great guy to be around," Troth said. "He pumps up all of us, and he pumps up his whole coaching staff, and that trickles down to us. Last year's done, and it's a new era."

A more open era. A more successful era? Thompson needs time to answer that one.

— Gregg Doyel



MARSHALL THUNDERING HERD

They do things a bit differently down in Huntington, W.Va.

While everyone else in the MAC is in this seemingly endless march up the hill, Marshall lives there — at the top of the mountain. The rest of the conference is still trying to get there.

a falloff at Marshall this season, despite the loss of Leftwich and some pretty good linemen. For some added perspective, consider that eight of the current members of the Mid-American Conference have never beaten Pruett and the Herd.

A 1965 graduate of Marshall, Pruett can

around. Junior Josh Davis averaged almost 16 yards per reception, and consistently makes the tough catch in a crowd. Watts and Davis both rank in the top 10 nationally among returning wide receivers.

Getting the ball in their hands will likely be the job of Stan Hill, who spent

MAC Accustomed to Living Under Marshall Law

The hard part is staying there as teams keep making a run at the Herd.

Still, even losing another NFL quarterback (Byron Leftwich) and nine other starters, Marshall stands as the favorite to win its sixth league championship in its seven years in the MAC.

Once again the Herd is deep in talent. And veteran head coach Bob Pruett has shown time after time that when he has the right chess pieces he can outmaneuver just about anyone.

Pruett is 80-13 in seven years as head coach at Marshall. No one named Bear, Woody or JoePa, to name a few, have fared better.

So don't expect there to be much of

charm the socks off a recruit's parents and keep the boosters coming back for more.

Again this season, he will have plenty to work with as Marshall seeks to maintain its high standard of success. Maintaining the 500 yards of offense per game the Herd has averaged over the past two seasons will be the biggest challenge.

The wide receivers are as fast and as athletic as any in the conference, and with the way Marshall likes to throw the football, that is a very good place to start. The Herd led the MAC in passing offense last season with 370 yards per game and 35 touchdowns, and there is no reason to change what works.

Senior Darius Watts caught six passes per game last season, and led the MAC with 12 receiving touchdowns. He should leave those numbers in the dust this time

most of the past three seasons holding the clipboard and watching Leftwich work.

Hill filled in ably for Leftwich when the big guy was injured late last season, leading Marshall to a critical win over Miami that positioned the Herd for a sixth straight MAC East title. In that game Hill completed 25 of 39 passes for 292 yards, threw for four TDs and ran for another. In his two starts, Hill rushed for four touchdowns and passed for five more.

"We'll start with Stan and just see what happens," Pruett said. "He showed what he can do last year filling in for Byron, and we are confident in what he can do."

Joining Hill in the backfield will be tailback Butchie Wallace, who comes off an injury-plagued 2002 season in which he was limited to just 129 carries. With the sprains and muscle pulls healed, Wallace is running with more power and ease than he has in a couple of years, and his explosive style should lead to a 1,000 yard season.

Despite its reputation as Air Marshall, Pruett wants it known that a healthy Wallace backed up by several capable younger players gives Marshall the rushing foundation for its offense.

"The running game is always an area of emphasis for me," Pruett said. "We always need to focus on running the ball better."

The responsibility for making that happen starts up front, where a fairly major reshuffling is underway. Nate McPeck starts for a fourth season at tackle and protects Hill in the pocket, while Luke Salmons returns as a starter at guard.

After those two, the Herd looks to some talented but relatively inexperienced players to fill out the offensive line.

at a glance

2002: 11-2 overall; 7-1 MAC (1st East)

COACH: Bob Pruett — At Marshall and overall: 80-13; 7 years

RETURNING STARTERS: 12; 6 offense, 6 defense

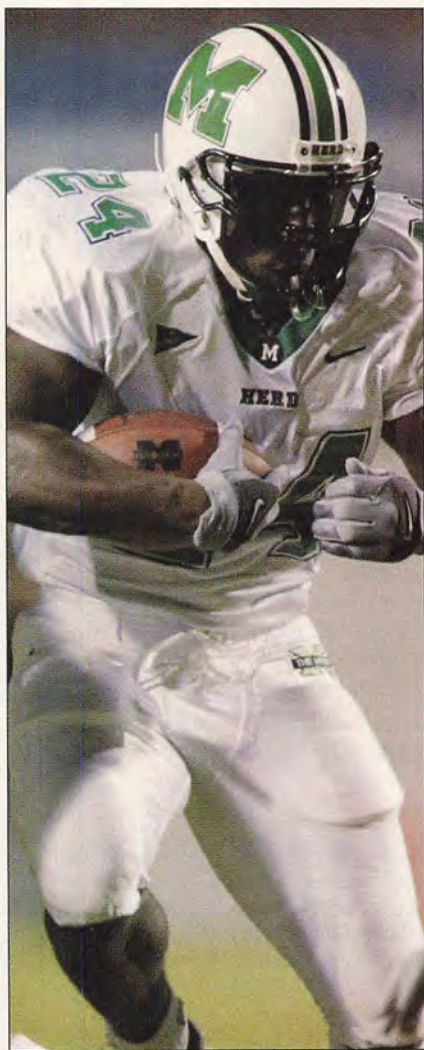
PLAYERS TO WATCH: WR Darius Watts, WR Josh Davis, RB Butchie Wallace, OT Nate McPeck, DT Toriano Brown, DT Jamus Martin, LB J.T. Rembert, CB Roberto Terrell

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: The Herd has a couple of capable quarterbacks, a stable of solid running backs, and plenty of speed and depth at wide receiver. If the line comes together, this could be just another Marshall offensive machine — and that is often good enough.

THUNDERING HERD

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: The Herd lost both its punter and place-kicker when Curtis Head graduated, so the special teams are in a state of significant transition. Marshall was near the bottom of the NCAA in punt and kick returns last year, and suffered more than an isolated breakdown. This ranks as a major area of concern.

OVERVIEW: Losing a major talent like Byron Leftwich is huge, but junior Stan Hill proved more than adequate running the offense for several games last season while Leftwich was injured. With the talent surrounding him, he should be efficient and does not need to be spectacular. The defense is as athletic and speedy a bunch



**BUTCHIE WALLACE RETURNS AS THE STARTER
AT RUNNING BACK**

PHOTO BY CRAIG JONES/GETTY IMAGES

It might end up doing so by committee, using a number of guys in all of the various line positions. Looking ahead to the start of the season, this looks like a potential trouble spot for the Herd.

At tight end, Georgia transfer Jason Rader returns after starting every game last year. He had 30 catches for 320 yards but proved most valuable as a run blocker.

On defense, where Marshall was second in the conference last season, allowing 334 yards per game, the Herd looks flush with speed and athleticism. The front is extremely fast and quick, led by Toriano Brown and Jamus Martin, a pair of all-conference selections last season.

There is good depth along the line and at linebacker, where J.T. Rembert, Dionte' Wilson and Kevin Adkins are all well experienced on the inside. The outside linebackers are a bit younger, but the Marshall wealth of speed and pursuit

capability will likely carry them.

In the secondary there is concern over the considerable turnover the Herd has experienced. Roberto Terrell is the only returning starter back there. Marshall had the best pass defense in the league last season, giving up only 161 yards per game through the air and just 10 passing TDs, but the Herd will be hard-pressed to get close to those numbers this time around.

The special teams are in a major state of flux following the graduation of Curtis Head, who capably handled both the punting and place-kicking the last couple of years.

On the other side, the Herd was near the bottom of the national charts in both punt and kick returns last year and showed a penchant for giving up the big play. Pruett is well aware of the critical need in this area.

"We have a lot of questions to answer on special teams, not only with our return game, which struggled last year, but also with our kickers," Pruett said. "Having to replace a guy like Curtis Head who did so much for us will be very tough."

Ben Lewis looks like the front-runner to land the place-kicking job, unless he gets edged out by true freshman Ian O'Connor, a recruit from Knoxville. Clint Rose should inherit the punting work as he comes off a redshirt year.

Despite the remarkable success his well-oiled machine has produced over the years, Pruett is not afraid to lift up the hood and tinker a bit. Pruett shuffled his staff considerably in the offseason, naming West Virginia native George Darlington, who has been an assistant at Nebraska for the past 30 years, to direct the recruiting efforts. Third-year Marshall assistant Lou Anarumo takes over as special teams coordinator.

THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Most Valuable Player

WR Darius Watts
Emerging Star

QB Stan Hill
Top Newcomer
LB Gavin Herscher

"I don't see a whole lot of difference in this football team from the ones we've had in the past," Pruett said matter-of-factly. "In some areas we're better than we were last year, and in some areas we need to grow a bit."

Pruett does face the toughest sched-

THUNDERING HERD

2003 DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

QB Stan Hill, Jr./Graham Gochneaur, Jr.
RB Butchie Wallace, Sr.*/Wilbur Hargrove, So.
WR Darius Watts, Sr.*/Nate Manns, So.
WR Jason Schroeder, Sr./Marquis Huggins, Jr.
WR Josh Davis, Jr.*/Tremel Guillory, Jr.
TE Jason Rader, Sr.*/Joe Deifel, Jr.
LT Nate Griffin, Jr./Ryan Nolan, Fr.
LG Luke Salmons, Sr.*/Ryan Baynes, So.
C Joey Stepp, Sr./Jesse Saito, Jr.
RG Toby Bullock, So./Dwayne Robinson, Jr.
RT Nate McPeck, Sr.*/Josh Blakey, Jr.
PK Ben Lewis, Sr.

DEFENSE

LE Jonathan Goddard, Jr.*/Marcus Hairston, Jr.
LT Reggie Hayes, Jr./Ace Withrow, So.
RT Toriano Brown, Sr.*/Paul Sinclair, Sr.
RE Jamus Martin, Jr.*/Maurice McKinney, Jr.
OLB Charles Tynes, Sr.*/Donte' Newsome, So.
MLB J.T. Rembert, Jr.*/Carlos Morgan, So.
OLB Dionte' Wilson, Jr./Kevin Atkins, Jr.
CB Roberto Terrell, Jr.*/Ivan Clark, Fr.
CB Willie Smith, So./Chris Royal, So.
S Gladstone Coke, Sr./Dennis Thornton, So.
SS Moriah Anderson, Jr./Curtis Keyes, Fr.
P Clint Rose, So.

ule in school history this fall, with seven road trips that include games against Tennessee and Kansas State outside the conference.

Keys, too, are that the Thundering Herd is playing on the road at Central Florida and Miami — the two teams expected to be Marshall's chief rivals in the MAC East this time around.

It won't be easy. But in the end, it figures to be Marshall.

— Matt Markey

ACC

A Look Back

5 YEARS AGO: 1998

Although Florida State and Georgia Tech shared the league championship with 7-1 records, the Seminoles were the real champ, owing to their 34-7 rout of the Yellow Jackets. For FSU, it was the seventh ACC title in as many tries. It was one of its most impressive crowns, considering that the Seminoles lost at N.C. State in their ACC opener, but then won 10 games in a row before falling to Tennessee in the national championship game.

- ACC co-champions: Florida State (7-1, 11-2)
Georgia Tech (7-1, 10-2)
- ACC Player of the Year: Torry Holt, WR, N.C. State
- Heisman Trophy: Ricky Williams, TB, Texas
- 8th: Torry Holt, WR, N.C. State
- National champion: Tennessee (13-0) beat Florida State in the Fiesta Bowl, 23-16.

10 YEARS AGO: 1993

Bobby Bowden's Florida State Seminoles were one of the great teams of the past quarter-century, with Charlie Ward leading the way and winning the Heisman Trophy in the process. A late-season loss at Notre Dame seemed to cost the top-ranked Seminoles a shot at the national title, but a collection of surprising results got FSU into the championship game ... and the lads knew what to do. They beat Nebraska to win the national championship.

- ACC champion: Florida State (8-0, 10-1-1)
- ACC Player of the Year: Charlie Ward, QB, Florida State
- Heisman Trophy: Charlie Ward, QB, Florida State
- National champion: Florida State (12-1), beat Nebraska in the Orange Bowl, 18-16.

15 YEARS AGO: 1988

Clemson's ACC roll continued, with a third consecutive ACC championship. The Tigers' 13 all-time league crowns has them atop that list, too, although Florida State is closing fast, with 10. Duke's second-year mentor, Steve Spurrier, was named the league's Coach of the Year, as the Blue Devils won seven games for the first time in 26 seasons.

- ACC champion: Clemson (6-1, 10-2)
- ACC Player of the Year: Anthony Dilweg, QB, Duke
- Heisman Trophy: Barry Sanders, TB, Oklahoma State
- No ACC player in Top 10.
- Jim Thorpe Award: Deion Sanders, CB, Florida State
- National champion: Notre Dame (12-0) beat West Virginia in the Fiesta Bowl, 34-21 — the most recent title for the Irish.

20 YEARS AGO: 1983

Although Clemson dominated the league action — winning each of its seven conference games — the Tigers were on NCAA probation, so their 9-1-1 overall record meant little to the ACC. Maryland, a team that Clemson handled 52-27, won the league championship, since all of Clemson's games were not counted in the ACC standings.

- ACC champion: Maryland (5-0, 8-4)
- ACC Player of the Year: Ben Bennett, QB, Duke
- Heisman Trophy: Mike Rozier, RB, Nebraska
- 10th: Boomer Esiason, QB, Maryland
- National champion: No. 5 Miami beat No. 1 Nebraska, 31-30 in a classic Orange Bowl (and Georgia beat No. 2 Texas in the Cotton Bowl), giving the 'Canes their first of five titles.

25 YEARS AGO: 1978

Clemson went 6-0 and 10-1 under Charley Pell, who promptly left for Florida, with Danny Ford taking over for the bowl game. That turned out to be a 17-15 victory over Ohio State, and was the first step toward the Tigers' 1981 national title under Ford. The ACC championship was the first for Clemson in 11 seasons; it came thanks to a 28-24 victory in a showdown game with Maryland in late November.

- ACC champion: Clemson (6-0, 11-1)
- ACC Player of the Year: Steve Fuller, QB, Clemson
- Heisman Trophy: Billy Sims, HB, Oklahoma
- 6th (tie): Ted Brown, RB, N.C. State
- 6th (tie): Steve Fuller, QB, Clemson
- 8th: Eddie Lee Ivey, RB, Georgia Tech
- National co-champions: In a wild finish to the season, No. 2 Alabama beat No. 1 Penn State in the Sugar Bowl (14-7), and No. 3 Southern Cal beat No. 5 Michigan in the Rose (17-10) ... and the AP voted for Alabama (11-1) while the coaches voted for USC (12-1).

50 YEARS AGO: 1953

The first year of the Atlantic Coast Conference provided one of the greatest teams in the 50-year history — Jim Tatum's national champion Maryland Terrapins. Yet, because they didn't face each other and both went undefeated in ACC action, Maryland shared the league title with Duke ... one of six league crowns the Blue Devils won in the ACC's first 10 seasons.

- ACC co-champions: Maryland (3-0, 10-1)
Duke (4-0, 7-2-1)
- ACC Player of the Year: Bernie Faloney, QB, Maryland
- Heisman Trophy: John Lattner, HB, Notre Dame
- 4th: Bernie Faloney, QB, Maryland
- National champion: Maryland (10-1) went undefeated in the regular season; lost to Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl, 7-0.

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